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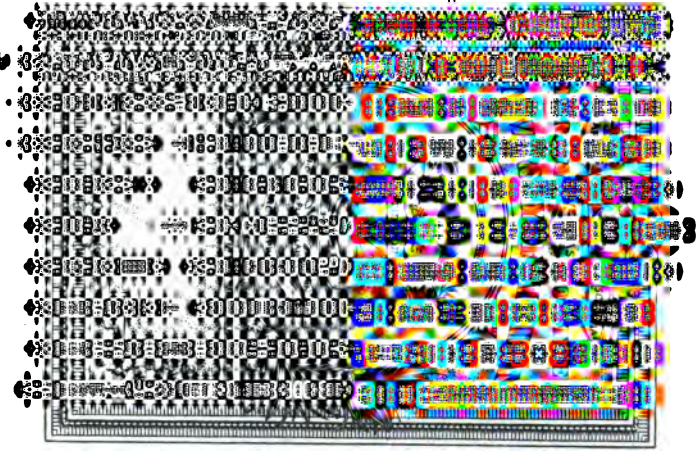

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A

DESCRIPTIVE

ACCOUNT

OF THE

ISLAND

OF

JAMAICA.

VOLUME II.

A

DESCRIPTIVE

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OF THE

ISLAND

OF

JAMAICA:

WITH

Remarks upon the Cultivation of the SUGAR-CANE, throughout the different Seaſons of the Year, and chiefly conſidered in a Picturesque Point of View;

ALSO

Obſervations and Reflections upon what would probably be the Conſequences of an ABOLITION of the SLAVE-TRADE, and of the EMANCIPATION of the SLAVES.

By WILLIAM BECKFORD, Eſq.

Author of *Remarks on the Situation of Negroes in Jamaica.*

——— "*Sine me, liber, ibis in urbem:*
"*Hei mihi! quod domino non licet ire tuo.*"

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

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A DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF THE ISLAND OF *JAMAICA.*

BETWEEN Chriſtmas and the actual commencement of the crop, the negroes are chiefly employed in what are called odd jobs, and are conſequently much divided. Some are giving the laſt finiſh to the exterior parts of the cane-fields; ſome are cleaning the intervals; and ſome, the weakly ones in particular, are ſet in to chop the paſtures, which is commonly the laſt thing done upon a plantation, excepting, perhaps, it be the putting in order and fencing-in thoſe places that may be ſubject

to the treſpaſſes of the cattle, in either the mountains or the plains.

In theſe different occupations there are but few objects that will admit of picturesque deſcription; but in the working of the roads, which is done moſt commonly at this particular ſeaſon of the year, and generally by hired negroes, which the way-wardens have a right to engage at ſo much a head, and to charge to the neighbouring eſtates according to their ſeveral aſſeſſments—in the working of the roads, I ſay, there are many accompanying circumſtances that cannot fail to ſtrike.

When the labourers are aſſembled into one group, and full of animation and of ſpirit, they all together elevate and let fall their hoes, and accompany every ſtroke with the chorus of contentment:—the obſerver ſeems to partake of the general emotion, and conſiders that as an amuſement when accompanied by indulgence, which, without

without encouragement, he would naturally ſuppoſe to be a hardſhip and a toil.

When they are ſeen working in front, and when conſequently the action of the limbs is obſerved to vary with the ſtrength of the body, and the expreſſion of the countenance to the weakneſs or the vigour of the frame; and when the exertions of the muſcles beſpeak the age and condition of thoſe who work—the lover of nature and of art will be delighted with theſe varieties that preſent themſelves with ſo much advantage to the imitations of the pencil, and the labours of the chiſſel.

When they are beheld in the profile, and their uplifted hoes are all gleaming together in the air, and their length of ſhadows is reflected upon the ground; when the curvatures of their bodies, and the inflexions of their limbs, be obſerved, and the difference of the ſexes in their various exertions be contraſted, and the ſtriking diſſimilarity of their make be duly

attended to—the picture which all theſe circumſtances exhibit, will be found to be not leſs pleaſing perhaps than ſingular and new.

It is amuſing to ſee them at a little diſtance when forming a curve according to the ſweep of the road, when only their hoes and the upper parts of their bodies are perceived emerging from the depth of the trench which they are employed to drain: the voices of ſome are now heard to reſound from the bottom, and of others from an eminence on each ſide, of a hollow way; the light burſting upon ſome, and the ſurrounding logwoods overwhelming others with a dark and impenetrable canopy of ſhade.

They are now buſy in the midſt of a river, uplifting maſſy fragments of rocks to make a fording-place for the wains and mules, the bridge having been ſwept away by the violent deſcent of the rains, the rapidity of the torrents, or the accumulation of

of waters increaſed by the growing progreſs of the ſtorm.

It is pleaſant to obſerve the current breaking againſt their arms and legs, to ſee the mullets glide adown the ſtream, and to behold the playful reflections of the ſun-beams in the water, or upon the rocks, the buſhes, and the weeds, which catch the light, and reflect their different ſhadows in the dimpling eddies that murmur on with a ſmooth and drowſy courſe, until they are abſorbed by the receiving flood below.

Every object about the plantation, but eſpecially around the buildings, appears at this time of the year to be alive: and the beating of the coppers, the clanking of the iron, the driving of the cogs, the wedging of the gudgeons, the repetition of the hammers, and the hooping of the caſks, are the cheerful precurſors of the approaching crop.

It muſt not be ſuppoſed that becauſe the year hath paſſed without a ſtorm, that the planter hath not other apprehenſions to encounter, and other fears to detain his mind in trouble and ſuſpenſe; for although he may have been relieved of the moſt conſequential alarm, and conſequently may be juſtified in flattering himſelf with the well-founded expectation of a favourable harveſt,—yet are there many diſappointments to be dreaded, which his care could not combat, nor his prudence foreſee.

The north winds may, from their violence, have broken off, or lodged, his canes; the rats may have injured, and the dry weather, in particular parts, conſumed, them: the worm may have bored into, and exhauſted, the ſap: the blaſt may have ruined them, or ſome other unforeſeen circumſtances may have diminiſhed their yielding, and thus have made them fall very ſhort in quantity of produce to what,

from

from their appearance, might have been reaſonably expected.

More attention and ſkill are required in the taking off of a crop of ſugar than the generality of overſeers, who act upon common principles and general rules, are equal to. The cultivation of the land is regular and methodical; and the cutting of the canes, and the manufacture of their produce, are more directed by preſcription, than conformable to expediency and art.

I am convinced that one ſeventh of every crop of ſugar is waſted upon ſome properties by neglect, or by a want of foreſight, ſtrength, or induſtry; and much of the failure of the produce will be conſequently owing to a delay in the operations of the field, and particularly at that critical period when the harveſt requires both vigour and diſpatch.

In that part of Jamaica in which I was reſident, the crops ſeldom begin before the middle of January; and they certainly ought not to be extended beyond the month of May, or the beginning of June. It would, indeed, be better for the negroes, the cattle, and the mules, could they be completed ſome weeks ſooner, that the produce might be tranſported to the barguadier before the rains ſet in, and the roads become wet and heavy.

As March and April are ſuppoſed to be the beſt yielding months, every nerve ſhould be exerted, and every power awakened to keep the mill at work throughout this period; nor do I know any ſeaſon of the year in which, if the canes be yielding well, that hired labour may be called in with equal profit.

Every aſſiſtance that is given to a ſugar-plantation before the canes ſhall have eſcaped all expected contingency, muſt depend upon chance for ſucceſs; but when there

there is a certainty, from the experience of thoſe already cut, that they are in a ſtate of perfection, they ſhould be got off with as much celerity as poſſible, for expedition in the time of harveſts is of infinite conſequence to the quality, as well as the quantity, of the produce.

Should any delay at this particular time be occaſioned, a drought might conſequently ſupervene, which would make at leaſt a daily, if not an hourly, diminution of the crop.

Should the rains ſet in with violence before the common period, the diſappointment would be likewiſe certain; but then theſe rains will not, like the dry weather, ſo much affect the expectations of the enſuing year. Should the ſeaſons therefore commence thus early, it would be better to leave off, for a time, the operations of ſugar-making, and more profitable to employ the negroes in planting ſuch pieces as have been already prepared, in putting in new

new land, or in ſupplying ſuch fields as have been recently cut; and I have often wondered that this laſt-mentioned practice is not more frequently adopted, as it may be not only effected with eaſe, but without a loſs of canes, as the tops of thoſe that have been lately ſeparated, will fully and advantageouſly anſwer this particular purpoſe.

Although many canes are planted at Chriſtmas, and from that time to the months of May and June, yet very little dependence is to be placed upon their production. It is the plant that is buried in Auguſt, September, and October, that gives, with tolerable ſeaſons, the moſt certain return; but that return muſt ſtill depend upon a variety of cauſes: it muſt depend upon the nature and cultivation of the ſoil, upon the care that is taken of it in its early ſtate, and the attention that is given to it in its progreſs to perfection; upon the proportionate treſpaſs it receives from cattle or rats, upon the little depredation

dation committed by the negroes; to the judgment with which it ſhall be cut and taken off the land; and laſtly, much muſt be referred to the ſkill, the integrity, and the experience of the boilers.

The ſugar-cane is perhaps, through all its different ſtages, the moſt uncertain production upon the face of the earth; and has, as I have already explained, the greateſt number of foreign and local enemies to encounter of any plant that either contributes to the wants, or that adminiſters to the comforts and luxuries of man.

When a plant of canes is intended to be made upon new land, it is not the common practice to dig holes (indeed it would be impoſſible, on account of the impediments of the ſtumps of trees which remain as yet unrotten) as is generally done upon thoſe pieces which have been already cultivated; but the cuſtom is to open the boſom of the ſoil, and for the negroes to depoſit the tops therein as they proceed, that

that the ground may not, when new, be too much expoſed, and that the production of it, when freſh, may continue to ratoon as long as poſſible: an advantage of more conſequence than is generally believed, as the labour will be but trifling when compared to the induction of a yearly plant, and the return of produce will be annually and with more certainty given; as the earth that is to receive the fall plant will, from its firſt preparation until its produce ſhall be carted to the mill, take up the period of at leaſt two years, whereas the ratoon comes round for the coppers in one.

The manner obſerved in felling wood and clearing the land in Jamaica, for either proviſions or canes, is exceedingly negligent and ſuperficial: the ſtumps of the trees are commonly left two and three feet or more above the ſurface of the earth; the roots of courſe muſt occupy a very conſiderable proportion of that ſoil which might be otherwiſe planted; and it will require many years before they will rot,

and

of conſequence before they will admit of the plough, or be capable of any other mode of cultivation.

I ſhall juſt obſerve, before I proceed any farther in my account of the crop, that although the negroes are at that ſeaſon permitted to eat as many canes as they may chooſe, yet is this privilege denied them in the field before the actual commencement of the harveſt.

They are allowed hot liquor from the coppers, but are not ſuffered to take (excepting now and then, as a particular indulgence, or in caſe of ſickneſs and convaleſcence) any ſugar from the coolers or the hogſheads.

They are ſometimes given rum from the ſtills; but as new ſpirit is particularly unwholeſome, nay, if taken imprudently, is often pernicious, it would be better if ſome other liquor could be ſuſtituted in its place, or ſuch at leaſt as having loſt its fiery particles,

ticles, may have been improved by care, and ſoftened by age.

A ſugar-plantation muſt neceſſarily have a variety of buildings; and hence at a diſtance it rather appears like a ſmall town than a contemptible village, inaſmuch as in the former are ſometimes ſeen ſome ſtructures of larger dimenſions than others, whereas in the latter they are uniform in ſimplicity, and have no ſuperior edifice to boaſt.

The overſeer's houſe is commonly, if the ſituation of the land will permit it, upon an eminence, and overlooks his offices, the ſtock-houſe, the hoſpital, the negro-houſes, the cooper's, wheelwright's, carpenter's, and blackſmith's ſhops; and laſt of all, the works, which conſiſt of the mill-houſe, curing-houſe, ſtill-houſe, and the traſh-houſes, which are in number from two to four or five, according to the extent of the plantation, the reſources of the

the materials, and the ſize of the buildings.

His reſidence conſiſts, in general, of a front and a back piazza, of a hall in the centre, and of a bed-chamber at one end, and of two other ſmaller apartments that are taken from the pent-houſe of the gallery behind. Some have more rooms, and ſome have leſs: but from the obſervations which I have had an opportunity to make, I think that this deſcription may be conſidered, at leaſt in that part of the Iſland in which I lived, as the general average.

In the offices are compriſed a ſtable and a corn-houſe, a kitchen, a waſh-houſe, a buttery, and a ſtore; with pig-ſties, a poultry-yard, a pigeon-houſe, and in ſhort every convenience and domeſtic accomodation that indolence may expect, or luxury require; and all theſe are attended by negroes, not only ſufficient for common wants, but who are abſolutely idle from a want

want of occupation, and lethargic from a want of thought.

Of the public and private comforts of an overſeer, I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak hereafter; and when his ſituation, in which he hath not any thing to riſk but much to gain, ſhall be contraſted with that of his employer, who has every thing to hazard but little to ſecure,—ſome idea may be formed of the relative happineſs of the one, and the miſerable dependence of the other.

The hoſpital for the reception of the ſickly and weak, is diſtinguiſhed, as before obſerved, by the appellation of the Hot-houſe; and of its conduct and abuſes much may be ſaid, much has been overlooked, and much, too much, I fear, has been inhumanly forgotten.

Of the ſighs that have been breathed, of the tears that have been ſhed, in private, too few, alas! are the notices that have been taken.

taken. The houſe of mortification becomes too often the grave of thought. The eye cannot inveſtigate the charms of nature in darkneſs, nor the ſoul expatiate in the confines of affliction.

The natural temper of the mind is ſupported by the fluctuations of its fears, its wiſhes, and its hopes: the proſpects of the earth are contraſted by ſunſhine and by ſhade; and the ſea is rendered wholeſome by the viciſſitudes of tempeſts and of calms: the day is the harbinger of night; and darkneſs precedes the bluſhes of the morn. Shall man then complain of ſorrow, when affliction leads to hope; when it is the teſt of his virtues, as it will be the reward of his end?

This building has a narrow piazza in front, at the end of which is a ſmall apartment for the nurſe or hot-houſe woman, in which are depoſited the few medicines that are left upon a plantation, and the different and neceſſary utenſils that ſickneſs may

require. In the body of the houſe is the hall or general dormitory for the weak and convaleſcent, at the ſame time that it literally ſerves them as a kitchen, a parlour, and all.

On each ſide of this apartment are two leſs roomy, in one of which are platforms for the invalids; and in the other (ſhould there not be any in the hall, which is ſeldom without) is placed a ſet of ſtocks, in which the lame negroes are confined, that they may be prevented from rambling at night, and that they may conſequently be always at hand to be overlooked and dreſſed; or in which the runaways are detained for example, or from which brought forth to work or puniſhment.

The better kind of negroes, when indiſpoſed, are ſuffered to lie-up in their own houſes, whither the doctor repairs to viſit them; and as they commonly know, or watch, his time of coming, they take care

care to keep themſelves in readineſs to receive him; though, perhaps, the very moment that he ſhall have mounted his horſe and turned his back, they go to work in their grounds, or ſet off upon a viſit to ſome diſtant plantation.

Theſe are abuſes that conſtantly happen: nor do I ſee how the doctor or the overſeer can otherwiſe prevent them, than by recommending a commodious and an airy hoſpital to be erected upon ſome healthy ſpot that may be overlooked by the white people; and in which building there ſhould be apartments deſtined to particular purpoſes; and not only proper beds for the ſick and the infirm to repoſe themſelves upon, but they ſhould be provided with proper clothes to keep their bodies warm, and ſhould not, upon any account, be ſuffered to walk amidſt the dews of night. Every eſtate ſhould have its own medicines, and be poſſeſſed of every article of ſuſtenance and comfort that can help to

ſtrengthen the weak, or continue the exertions of the ſtrong.

The negro-houſes are, in general, at ſome diſtance from the works, but not ſo far removed as to be beyond the ſight of the overſeer. It is the cuſtom now to have them built in ſtrait lines, conſtructed with ſome degree of uniformity and ſtrength, but totally diveſted of trees and ſhrubs; nor do I think that they are at all more mean in general appearance than thoſe that help to form a village in ſome of the more ſequeſtered and needy parts of England: they will, I believe, be found to be more tight and more commodious.

The fowl-houſe and the poultry-yard of a plantation will certainly have charms for a Dutchman's eye; and I cannot help thinking that Nature, in her moſt rural and ſimple ſcenes, is, while intereſting, replete with moral pleaſure. Whatever contributes to the delights of common obſervation, or to the neceſſary comforts and the humble

humble enjoyments of life, are ſure to be attended with ſentiment, and cannot fail to awaken gratitude: thus the chicken that pecks the grain at the cottage-door, or the pigeon that ſteals the ſand from the borders of the ocean, are objects of thought; and as they intereſt our feelings, they become entitled to our protection, and deſerve our hoſpitality and friendſhip.

There are few people who love nature, and who take a delight in the ſimple operations of life, who are not particularly and morally pleaſed with the barn, the dairy, and the farmer's yard. It is the firſt enjoyment and the favourite theme of thoſe who have been long engaged in the commerce of cities, or in the purſuits of ſedentary life, and from which they have at length retired, to attend the milk-maid, and to deſcribe her innocent happineſs when draining the milk from her patient cows, which cheerfully give their wholeſome ſtreams, and which, while they chew the cud, embalm the morning air with their breathing ſweets.

At the firſt bluſh of op'ning dawn
That gilds the dew-drop on the lawn,
Shrill chanticleer is heard to crow,
High-perch'd upon the barley-mow:
Awaken'd by the lively ſound,
His feath'ry mates attend around.
He ſcrapes the earth, nor ſcrapes in vain,
But gallantly extracts the grain:
The clucking hens, attending by,
Now pecking drop the little fly,
Or to their downy chickens ſhow
The grain upon the ſands below.

Now on the dove-cote only hear
What plaintive murmurs reach the ear!
How bowing, ſtrutting, billing, cooing,
The am'rous pigeons all are wooing!
The ſparrows too, upon the thatch,
Their ev'ry-varied motion watch;
And to the tender impulſe yield,
Ere hunger calls them to the field.

The different ſheds under which the tradeſmen labour, are in general uncommonly pictureſque, as are the occupations of thoſe who are buſied in them; and the varieties they repreſent will very ſtrikingly admit of that kind of deſcription in which Adrian Oſtade ſo very particularly excelled.

The

The ſhape of the caſk, the action of the cooper, the different utenſils that are ſcattered about, the blazing fire, the ſleeping cur, the oppoſitions of light and ſhade, and the playful reflections that the up-lifted tools occaſion, would all together contribute to the formation of a picture in his very beſt and varied ſtyle. The features and complexions of the figures, indeed, are very different from thoſe which his pencil had been uſed to delineate; but in point of dreſs, and the interior accompaniments of building, and the exterior ornaments of landſcape, and of their objects of domeſtic and rural ſcenery,—I cannot but think them correſpondent to his taſte and execution.

The works in Jamaica in which are manufactured the ſugar and the rum, are upon a large ſcale, and upon ſome plantations make a very noble appearance, and will require a particular deſcription, and a very ſuccinct explanation of their uſes and their ends.

Some of theſe buildings admit of picturesque magnificence, and ſwelling upon hills, or ſinking in the vales, will conſequently ſtrike the beholder with different impreſſions.

Theſe edifices are of various dimenſions, but do not always accord with the powers and expectations of the different eſtates.

Some properties that only make one hundred hogſheads of ſugar and fifty puncheons of rum, have conveniencies ſufficient to manufacture, and to contain, at leaſt three times the above-mentioned amount of produce; and ſome eſtates, that make a double proportion, have not half the appointments of thoſe already deſcribed.

To expence in plantation-buildings, in ſuperfluous coppers, ſtills, and ſtores, I am, from unprofitable experience, a decided enemy. I would recommend neceſſary, but not expenſive, conveniencies; for

for that which cannot be with advantage uſed, it muſt be a diſadvantage to have repaired; and repairs without method, and alterations without foreſight, are frequently found to coſt more than new works would have done, if planned by ſcience, and accompliſhed with judgment.

It is diſgraceful to ſee the waſte of coppers, of ſtills, of mill-caſes, gudgeons, grating-bars, and, in ſhort, of many other plantation-utenſils that are ſcattered upon ſome properties about the works and paſtures; and yet perhaps the ſame liſt of ſtores is annually ſent, and of conſequence the ſame expence incurred: it is not ſo much what is made, as what is ſaved, that forwards independency, and ſubſtantiates the permanent riches of him who poſſeſſes them.

The works alone upon ſome plantations have been known to coſt from fifteen to twenty thouſand pounds ſterling, and more;

The boiling-houſe and the curing-houſe are connected together; and thoſe built in the form of a T, are, I think, the moſt commodious: the horizontal line repreſents the firſt; and the perpendicular, the laſt. In the former there is always a large receiver lined with lead; and one is likewiſe frequently placed in the mill-houſe, to contain the liquor that is expreſſed from the canes, until ſuch time as it ſhall be wanted in the clarifier. In this copper, the largeſt in the boiling-houſe, the temper, or a proportion of ſlack lime, is given according to the richneſs or the weakneſs of the juice, and conſiſtently with the nature and the quality of the land upon which the canes have grown; a knowledge of which it requires attention and experience to obtain.

Beſides the great copper, there are three, four, or five others, in gradual diminution of ſize, and reduction of contents, according to the ſtrength and the extent of the plantation; and upon ſome of

of which they work, although not with equal profit, from ſeven to twelve, or more. Five coppers will certainly do more execution in proportion, than ten; and ſeven, if well attended and kept conſtantly fluſh of liquor, will turn out as much ſugar in a week as any boiling-houſe need require.

For an eſtate that only makes from one hundred to one hundred and forty hoſheads of ſugar, four coppers, provided the clarifier be large, will be found ſufficient: for a plantation that makes from two to three hundred hogſheads, there will not be required more than ſix or ſeven; nor do I think that any ſingle property, let it be even capable of making the double of this quantity of produce, can work with ſpirit and advantage more than ten or twelve.

A boiling-houſe fifty feet long by thirty wide, and a curing-houſe eighty in length and of a proportionable breadth, will give ſufficient room for the manufacture

ture of any reaſonable quantity of produce; and lowly buildings of timber, or wattled and plaiſtered, will anſwer every purpoſe of the plantation, as well as thoſe that are conſtructed of more conſiderable dimenſions and more weighty materials, and which will be conſequently attended with additional expence.

In crop-time the overſeer ſhould have a room divided from the curing-houſe, with a window into the boiling-houſe, to ſleep in; and the reaſons are too obvious to need an explanation.

I think it of conſequence that the ſtoke-hole ſhed, behind the latter of the above-mentioned buildings, ſhould be more incloſed, and rendered more warm and comfortable, than they in common are, as the column of wind that blows through them when they are too open and too much expoſed, is very diſtreſſing to thoſe negroes whoſe duty it is to make and watch the fires,

fites; an inconveniency which might, without much trouble and expence, be eaſily avoided.

The ſtill-houſes in general are more large, and crowded with more ciſterns than are abſolutely neceſſary, or even wanted. Two, or at the moſt, three good ſtills, and twelve or ſixteen large ciſterns, provided they correſpond with the low-wine ſtill in proportion of gallons, will anſwer the wants, and reward the expectations, of the moſt ample eſtate.

I do not think that theſe buildings are in general well calculated to confine the heat ſo neceſſary to the fermentation of the liquor; but then, if too much air be excluded, the operations of rum-making would be ſtill more unwholeſome than they at preſent are.

That part of the ſtill-houſe in which the ciſterns are placed, is conſiderably higher than that in which the ſtills are hung,

hung, and the negroes are conſequently obliged to aſcend or deſcend by a flight of ſteps. One large ciſtern is often ſet aſide for the fermentation of the liquor only, and another for the reception of the molaſſes, which the ſooner uſed, the better will they yield. A large butt for the depoſit of the low wines is likewiſe a neceſſary appendage of this part of the building, as are a dunder-ciſtern and a tank for the reception of the worms, in, or at the back of, the ſtill-houſe, indiſpenſable neceſſaries of this part of the works. A rum-houſe is ſometimes added; which, if it can be properly ſecured from ſtealth and fire, is what ought not to be diſpenſed with.

When the negroes are ſet in to ram, and to make tight the ciſterns with clay, they have a ſong and chorus that is peculiar to this labour, which is one of the moſt tedious and the moſt heavy upon an eſtate: and it is inconceivable what an immenſe quantity of earth, and how long a time it will take to reduce it to a ſufficient

ſufficient conſiſtency to prevent a future leakage. They work very cloſe together, and throw their rammers with the moſt regular cadence; while their downcaſt looks, the action of their hands and feet, and the ſwelling exertions of their naked bodies, would furniſh the lover of ſcience with many fine and manly ſubjects.

The traſh-houſes are from two to three, or four, according to the extent of the eſtate, and the annual expectations of the crop.

Some of theſe are compoſed of ſtone pillars, and of framed roofs; and ſome, of poſts that are ſunk in the ground, and which have common rafters on the top, to ſupport the thatch with which they are covered.

As theſe erections are particularly open to the intruſion of winds, and are very often, from careleſſneſs and other cauſes, ſet on fire; it is certainly imprudent to make them large and expenſive, eſpecially

as thoſe of ſmaller dimenſions, and more ſimple conſtruction, will anſwer the purpoſes rather better; for it will be *often* neceſſary, and *always* prudent, to have them removed from time to time to more elevated and dry ſituations, as the land upon which theſe buildings are conſtructed very ſoon becomes ſwampy, from the damps and wet which the traſh cannot fail to engender: and it is therefore expedient that it ſhould be, before it is houſed, as dry, and in as good a condition, as it can poſſibly be.

Some traſh-houſes are upwards of one hundred feet long, and ſome not more than fifty: but I am ſtrongly in favour of thoſe that are attended, in caſe of accident, with the leaſt expence and trouble.

They ſhould, in my opinion, be always wattled round, to prevent the intruſion of cattle, and more eſpecially that of ſtraggling negroes, who will often inadvertently throw themſelves down upon the traſh, illume their pipes, and drop perhaps a ſpark,

ſpark, and hence occaſion a ſudden and a tremendous conflagration; examples of which have frequently happened in my neighbourhood.

Having mentioned the buildings that are neceſſary upon a plantation, I ſhall now ſuppoſe them to be all in readineſs to receive the different materials which contribute to the proceſſes of ſugar-making, and the diſtillation of rum: and it may hence be eaſily conceived how ſanguine muſt be the expectation of the planter, how impatient the negroes, and how active and zealous the overſeer who has the intereſt and proſperity of his employer at heart, and who ſurveys the golden promiſe of the field with hope, and who now beholds the labour, the expence, and danger of the former months, about to be recompenſed by fine weather, and the flattering appearance of a plentiful harveſt.

When the planter finds himſelf relieved of apprehenſions, he becomes ſanguine in the diſcharge of his contingencies and debts, and is not backward in making promiſes to his merchant in England, or to the ſtore-keepers in Jamaica; and however his want of punctuality may be taxed by the illiberal, the oppreſſive, and unfeeling, I am inclined to think that when he promiſed, he moſt ferioufly meant to perform. His diſappointments have, therefore, a ſerious effect upon him who truſts: and who ſhall be ultimately found to be the greateſt ſufferer; the merchant, who has every emolument, and who holds a ſecurity in his lands, that is in value to the amount of double or treble his demand; or the planter, whoſe property is tied up, and who is conſequently obliged to ſubmit to every exaction; it will require impartiality to inveſtigate, as well as truth and juſtice to explain.

I purpoſe to dwell, in the courſe of theſe remarks, upon the relative ſituations of both;

both; and ſhall ſpeak my mind with that candor and freedom which it is the duty of every man to do, who preſumes to make an appeal to the patience and liberality of the public; and which will expect, in the place of ſenſeleſs declamation and idle complaint, a fair and an honeſt inveſtigation of facts.

Unmoved by inſult, and unawed by power, the man who is conſcious of the integrity of his intentions, however limited may be his means, will look down with contempt upon the machinations of meanneſs and rapacity; as a ſelf-approving conſcience is a fortreſs againſt which the batteries of intereſt and diſſimulation, of extortion and of fraud, may diſcharge their noiſy artillery unnoticed and deſpiſed.

If the mind be conſcious of peace, the body will not dread alarm; as he who is not delinquent, will not be apprehenſive of juſtice.

O conſcience! what an oracle art thou!
Deſtin'd to lead our wayward thoughts from ill,
And point our proſpects to the verge of life.

The ſuſpenſe and anxiety of a planter is hardly to be conceived when he ſpeculates in either the alteration of an old, or the erection of a new mill; when his hopes are mingled with his fears; and when he contraſts his future expectations of gain with the poſſible failure of ſucceſs.

The moment the flood-gate opens and the water deſcends, he feels his boſom beat with agitation; every drop becomes of conſequence, and every revolution of the wheel is obſerved with anxiety and intereſt. The canes are accumulated bundle upon bundle, the ſtream of liquor is explored, the receiver gauged, and the time it takes to fill is critically aſcertained. If every thing ſucceed to his wiſh and expectation, he feels his mind relieved from the miſeries of ſuſpenſe; he regales himſelf with his friends, and congratulates himſelf upon the

the accompliſhment of what has been long the painful object of his thoughts, but now the harbinger of expedition, and the reduction of expence and labour.

But ſhould the water be not ſufficient, or ſhould any impediment ariſe to obſtruct its paſſage, the dam be carried away, the arches fall, or gutter leak,—it is natural to ſuppoſe that his feelings will keep pace with the magnitude of the objects, and that every exertion will be made to repair the breaches, to re-conſtruct the conduits, and to induce a larger ſtream, that no future failure or diſappointment may be apprehended.

Of the certain execution of the machine there can be but little doubt, as mechanics proceed upon too ſure a foundation to deceive the expectations of the artiſt; but then the cogs may break, the gudgeons draw, the caſes ſplit, the timbers break, the rollers warp: and one or other of theſe accidents is always liable to happen; and

hence the life of a planter is a continual ſtate of uncertainty and trouble.

Though there may be doubt as to its general ſucceſs, yet there is ſomething animating in the trial of a new experiment, whether it be in the cultivation of the land, or in the grinding of thoſe canes which that land ſhall have produced, and which the old proprietor, at the cloſe of life, attends with as much ſolicitude as the young man who is only beginning his paſſage through it; nor is it to be wondered at, if the mind be in a conſtant ſtretch in thoſe latitudes in which ſo many contingencies of climate occur, and from which no ſeaſon of the year can be ſaid to be entirely exempt.

In every ſituation of life, a man has ſome regular occupation to purſue, or ſome imaginary calling to amuſe, or to fix his attention; and there are thoſe perhaps who are as much delighted with the theory that

that leads to ruin, as thoſe are whoſe practice has uniformly conducted to wealth.

Some diſpoſitions, as every one muſt have obſerved who has had the leaſt communication with the world, are better calculated to diſſipate, than to raiſe or augment, a fortune. The man who purſues one patient and ſteady line of conduct, without turning out of the beaten track of intereſt, to comfort the afflictions or to relieve the wants of his fellow-creatures, is more likely to attain his worldly ends, than he who has the weakneſs to ſacrifice, not only his comforts, but his health, to promote the happineſs of others.

It ſeems to be an eſtabliſhed maxim, that liberality is incompatible with buſineſs; and it is, moreover, a melancholy truth, that friendſhip is too often ſunk in misfortune; and that he who has formerly lived without ſhame, and ſtill battens upon the means of others, will not ſcruple to injure them without compunction, when adverſity

adverſity and the growing mortifications of humiliation, and of want, and the infirmities of life, brought on by oppreſſion and care, ſhall have ſunk them down to the loweſt ſtate of ſorrow and deſpondency.

I ſhall leave, for the preſent, theſe gloomy reflections, and ſhall turn my deſcription to more lively concerns;—to the negroes who, having juſt received the cheerful ſummons of the overſeer, begin to prepare their bills for the commencement of the crop; and who, at this time, exhibit a ſcene of lively intereſt, and ſomething different from thoſe accounts of rural labour which ſo much contributed to ſwell the bulky contents of a former volume: and if the reader ſhall have the patience to wade through the heavy matter of this, it will, I fear, be rather a proof of his liberality and perſeverance, than of his taſte and judgment.

There

There ſeems to be a pleaſing alacrity in the negroes, when they run, in playful mood, acroſs the paſture, and endeavour to outſtrip each other in attaining the grind-ſtone, upon which they try the temper of their bills: and a picture of a very ſingular caſt might be made from the different groups of men, women, and children, that ſurround it; and upon which, while one is whetting his tools, and others are employed in turning the ſhaft, the reſt remain in eager expectation, and ſeem to divide or anticipate their mutual toil.

The ſituation in which this inſtrument, upon ſome plantations, is placed, is not always barren of pictureſque appearance, particularly if it be turned by a part of the ſtream of water that flows from the gutter that ſupplies the mill; and which being a bold and a prominent object, and diſtinguiſhed, however clumſy the parts, by ſome kind of architecture, gives an intereſt to that which might be otherwiſe conſidered as inſignificant and tame.

However

However mean the manual operations of the negroes may in ſome inſtances be, yet are there always accompanying circumſtances to give variety, and hence to render them not altogether unamuſing.

A large ſweep of arches, through which is let in a proſpect of the diſtant country, and that country perhaps embelliſhed with the moſt magnificent and lively ſcenes that Nature can offer to the regard of the enthuſiaſt, or to the obſervation of the painter, is a common feature in a Jamaica landſcape: nor are the objects with which theſe buildings are commonly ſurrounded, at all deficient in pictureſque variety.

They are, in ſome parts, covered with buſhes and with ſhrubs; and in others the brittle ſand-box tree, the whiſpering plantain, the nodding bamboo, or the ſtately fig-tree, expand their various ſhades, beneath the gloom of which the herds and flocks repoſe to avoid the ardour of the mid-day rays, to ruminate in cool repoſe, and liſten

to

to the murmurs of the cryſtal ſpring which winds in ſlender rills between their feet, or flows in irriguous channels acroſs the neighbouring plain.

Sometimes they recline under the arches themſelves, and enjoy the dripping waters that penetrate through the crevices of the wall, or now and then ſteal out to browze the herbage that is ſpread around, until, collected together, they are driven from their places of ſhelter: the ſteers are caught and yoked; the cows, the heifers, and the calves, are driven to their paſturage; and the goats and ſheep to their accuſtomed haunts. The hogs forſake their ſties, and all around the works appears to be in motion. The negroes leave their hovels, and return again to their labour in the field.

Some cattle-pens are ſurrounded by cotton-trees of an immenſe height and projection of branches, beneath the ſhadows of

of which the herds and flocks repoſe and chew the cud; while the ſun-beams at noon are glowing around, and the ventilations of the breeze give freſhneſs to heat, to relaxation vigour, and ſenſe to thought.

Sweet is the murmur of the riſing breeze
That gently undulates the tufted trees;
When ev'ry branch unto the zephyr ſighs
With hoarſe accordance, and with low replies;
When all is ſilent, ſave the tinkling rill,
Or ſhell wide ecchoing from the diſtant hill;
Or chiming bells that warn the patient flocks
To leave the meadows, and explore the rocks;
Beneath the ſhades of which they may repoſe,
Nor dread the vertic ſun that ardent glows.

The contemplative man delights to dwell
Where Nature's hand has ſcoop'd the vaulted cell,
And where, from ev'ry drop that hangs around,
By petrefaction, into ſubſtance bound,
He draws ſome uſeful moral to engage
The youthful ear, or ſoothe the cares of age.

The labourers are now prepared for the expected harveſt: they hold themſelves in readineſs in their reſpective houſes to obey the lively ſummons: the ſhell is heard with

with a ſhrill alarm to call them forth; it ecchoes among the hills, and reſounds acroſs the plains; it ſeems to ſwell with a cheerful blaſt, and to invite to profit and abundance. The overſeer is anxious to give his orders to commence the crop; he is the firſt in the field: the driver follows with his knotted ſtick, and his whip ſlung careleſsly acroſs his ſhoulder: the latter walks briſkly to the place of labour; the negroes follow, and he ſhows them upon what part of the piece to begin.

The tops of the canes are now in a conſtant tremor; the yellow ſwarths are ſtrewed upon the ground; and vigour and diſpatch are obſerved in every *body*, and apparent in every *hand*.

The driver, with an authoritative voice, cautions them to cut the canes cloſe, and not to waſte too much of the top; to ſeparate thoſe that are tainted, and to diſcard thoſe joints that have been injured by the rats: he keeps them in a regular ſtring before

before him, and takes care to chequer the able with the weak, that the work may not be too light for the firſt, nor too heavy for the laſt. He intimidates ſome, and encourages others; and too often, perhaps, a tyrant in authority, he impoſes upon the timid, and ſuffers the ſturdy to eſcape.

There is ſomething particularly picturesque and ſtriking in a gang of negroes, when employed in cutting canes upon the ſwelling projections of a hill; when they take a long ſweep, and obſerve a regular diſcipline in their work: indeed the ſurrounding accompaniments of the field afford a very ſingular and intereſting variety.

As the pieces upon hilly eſtates are in themſelves uncommonly romantic, ſo are the minutiæ of which they are compoſed not leſs various and pleaſing. The colour of the negroes, when bending beneath the verdant canopies of the canes, and theſe ſoftened by the branching ſhadows of the majeſtic cotton-tree which riſes in all the pride

pride of vegetation and of height, from the lowly glen in which its ample roots have taken earth, and which defraud the minor products of the glade of genial moiſture and ſuſtentation, contribute to the moving landſcape.

Behind the cutters are obſerved the rows of canes that glow with a bright and golden yellow; the tyers proceed, and bind them up: the mules now traverſe to collect or carry off their heavy loads; the cattle are ſpread over the lower parts of the hill, and feed upon the tops that are left behind, while the wains remain at bottom in quiet expectation of that freight which is to reward the avarice of the maſter, by the labour of his oxen; and what this labour is, their reduced and lank ſituation will too often, I fear, ſufficiently explain.

The common practice at the beginning of crop, is to ſet-in all the able hands for one or two days previouſly to the putting about the mill, to cut as many canes as

poſſible, that it may continue, when once ſet in motion, a large and regular weekly execution; which, if the eſtate be not well handed, and abundant in cattle, it will be found very difficult to do.

Whenever the mill ſhall ſtand idle for want of a ſupply of canes, the negroes from the works are then ſent out to aſſiſt the operations of the field: the buſineſs of the coppers becomes ſtagnant; they get cool; the liquor ſoddens; and every delay of this kind is of courſe attended with loſs.

When the mill is therefore put about, it ſhould, if poſſible, be kept to ſteady work; the feeders and the boilers would be then confined to their particular provinces, and would not loſe their time in being alternately ordered from the works to the field, and again from the field to the works.

The time of crop, particularly the commencement of it, exhibits a very lively and

and a pleaſing ſcene, and every living creature ſeems to be in ſpirits and in expectation: the negroes are not only alert and cheerful, but the cattle and the mules, having recovered the fatigues of the planting-ſeaſon, appear to be freſh and vigorous: nor do they ſeem to require the encouragement of the voice, nor to dread the thunders of the whip; for this inſtrument of correction in Jamaica, whether it be in the hands of the cart-man, the mule-boy, or the negro-driver, is heard, in either caſe, to reſound among the hills and upon the plains, and to awaken the ecchoes wherever the reverberations of the laſh ſhall paſs.

There is ſomething extremely animating in the proſpect of the roads between the pieces upon which the canes are carted, and the mill: the wain that is piled up with its golden bundles, the ſlow and ſteady motion of the oxen, the more nimble ſtep of the mules, and the ſeeming urgency of their ſable drivers, give intereſt and variety to the moving ſcene,

and which are of courſe augmented according to the numbers of either that paſs and repaſs upon the reſounding and the duſty roads.

When the dry weather is fairly ſet in at the beginning of the crop, there begins to be a daily diminution of the verdure of the paſtures, and the freſhneſs of the canes; the rivers that were lately full to their brims, and overflowing their banks, begin now, by ſlow and perceptible degrees, to ſubſide; the aquatic plants that fringe their borders, and which were lately ſtruggling beneath the inundation, now hold their moiſtened heads above the ſurface, and ſpread forth their ſhadowy leaves, and reflect their maſſes in the ſtream which runs not as yet pellucid in its courſe, but which by degrees exchanges its yellow tide for the brown tranſparency of cryſtal.

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the rich variety of the banks of the rivers in Jamaica: the

the docks that adorn their edges, are of a prodigious and of a very pictureſque expanſion; and the depths of green by which they are diſtinguiſhed, afford a very ſtriking contraſt to the flowing element that reflects their images upon the depths below.

Some rivers ſweep through rocks, and drill themſelves a channel through arches and through caves: ſome are obſerved to divide contiguous mountains; ſome, to flow with a more haſty courſe; and others, to murmur with a leſs noiſy progreſs; while others ſteal gently through the plains, and waſh, with a ſeeming whiſper, the projecting arches which oppoſe, with gentle violence, their dimpling lapſe, and upon which the man of contemplation looks down from the pleaſing elevation, and obſerves the ripples break upon the borders, while he ſighs with ſenſibility to the plaintive murmurs of their ſweetly-flowing and tranſparent tides.

Here, the broad fig-tree rears its lofty head;
There, the bright mirror of the ſtream is ſpread,
Which, am'rous of the deep o'erhanging ſhade,
Delays its courſe until the ſun-beams fade.

The quieſcent appearances of rivers in Jamaica, every attentive admirer of Nature muſt have frequently obſerved; and when he reclines in penſive thought beneath the embowering ſhadows of the cotton-tree, which with all its penſile withes, and the fantaſtic weeds that hang and glow upon their extending branches, he feels the pleaſure of melancholy ariſe in his mind, from a due comtemplation of the ſurrounding, although a confined and ſequeſtered ſcene.

He obſerves the waters, without a lapſe or eddy, now hang with repoſe upon the neighbouring ſhores. The darkneſs of the over-hanging foliage that excludes the cheerful ſun-beams, diſpels not from his breaſt the plaintive thought; and though no zephyr ſhall ventilate the leaves, and bear

bear upon its wings his heavy ſighs, yet he may drop a tear upon the peaceful element, which will be no ſooner received than eternally forgotten.

He now endeavours to cheer his melancholy, and treads a ſilent path through the tangled briars and the matted graſs, and behind the ruſhes, the docks, and the weeds, that hang with mournful pendence over, and juſt wet their edges in, the placid ſtream, until a ſudden ray of light ſalutes his exit from the gloom, illuminates the poliſhed mirror that now appears to move, and through which the fiſh are ſeen to dart, or where the ſwarming flies occaſion ſucceſſive dimples as it flows, or at a diſtance repreſent the bubbles that a ſullen ſhower occaſions to ariſe.

The ſtream as yet ſcarce ripples on the land,
Though clouds reflected dance along the ſtrand:
A tranſient zephyr ſteals amidſt the ſhades;
And juſt awaken'd from the neighb'ring glades,
Bears on its balmy wings, to cheer the ſenſe,
A ſhow'r of ſoft, enliv'ning frankincenſe;

When lo! ſucceeding ruffles curl the tide,
Which murm'ring flow, and kiſs the river's ſide;
While, in its bright embrace, the flow'rs infold
Their hues, more rich than if the ſands were gold,
The ſilver waters, dimpled o'er by flies
That ſhow like drops of rain, in bubbles riſe.

As he purſues his contemplative walk, and ſtill continues to caſt his looks upon the varying element, he ſees it hurry on its courſe as he advances; he obſerves it flow along in larger reflections, which, as they catch the ſun, diſcover the pebbles that ſhine like cryſtals below, or that appear like diamonds in full luſtre upon the changing ſurface.

The waters are now ſpread into a deep and capacious baſon, in which the mullets are ſeen to ſhape their wanton courſe; and which repreſent, if great things may deſcend to a compariſon with ſmall, the gold and ſilver fiſh that curioſity confines within the tranſparent bounds of a cryſtal vaſe,

In which the little ſportive tribes are fed
Upon the ſweeten'd cake, or crumbs of bread.

They

They are now conſtrained in their courſe to leave the depth; and urged on by a ſucceeding impulſe, they ſpread themſelves over a ſhallow bottom, which for a time confines the ruſh of waters, and prevents its curling precipitation adown the white caſcade.

They now have gained the ſummit, and ſeem to pauſe for a moment before they ruſh amain: down falls at once the accumulated, heavy, and reſounding ſtream; the waters below ſeem to dread the impending fall, and ſhrink, as it were, from the weight of the inundation: the cataract deſcends with noiſe and fury: it forms a tremendous whirlpool underneath, in which up-rooted trees of the moſt early growth and ponderous ſize, are inſtantly ingulphed, are buried for a time in the watery grave, and emerge at laſt at a conſiderable diſtance from their place of deſcent, and load with their contents the adjoining banks: it works its way under

the rocks, and forms deep caverns at the bottom of the ſtream.

It now repents of the noiſe and confuſion that it has occaſioned, and ſeems to murmur like a froward child whoſe anger is appeaſed, and who, in ſtifled blubberings and drowzy murmurs, reſigns its little breaſt again to peace.

The river becomes at length confined; and roaring over a bed of rocks, it rather reſembles a torrent than a ſtream. It is here that the patient angler is ſeated, and obſerves the mountain-mullets and the calapavres darting by like ſudden gleams of light: his fly is hurried away by the impetuoſity of the waters; the fiſhes are carried out of ſight, to return no more; and the ſportſman has time to brood over the diſappointment he has ſuſtained.

As ſilence ſucceeds to noiſe, and peace to trouble, ſo do the waters now flow on in a more gentle courſe; they ſlowly wander

wander among the ruſhes, and with their freſhening ripples awake their ſighs.

Had the breeze been withheld, the bull-ruſh been
mute,
We never had heard or the ſyrinx or flute.

The foregoing deſcription of a river, is faithfully drawn from what I have frequently ſeen, as it flows adjoining to a tract of land in which I have ſome little intereſt.

There is a comfort in brooding over ſcenes, however diſtant, which formerly fed the mind with rural impreſſions; and when we are driven from them, it reminds us of the melancholy loſs of friends, from whom misfortune or intereſt has disjoined us, and whom we are not ever to ſee again.

Every little circumſtance that helps to ruffle the current of a river, has ſome intereſt to arreſt the obſerver's eye; a log of wood that ſails upon the ſurface of the waters, a floating cane, a feather, or a ſtraw,

ſtraw, cannot paſs by without his notice; and trifling as theſe objects may appear, they ſtill have intereſt enough to excite his reflections.

When he beholds a piece of timber buffeted about by the whirling eddy, by which it is now plunged into the abſorbing vortex, now driven up again, and now daſhed with fury againſt the buttereſs of the bridge, he may naturally reflect upon the ſituation of man who is toſſed about by the tempeſt, or ſwallowed by the ocean, or wrecked againſt the rocks, or engulphed in the ſand; and he may likewiſe moralize upon his ſtruggles through life, how he has been bandied about by diſappointment and misfortune, and at laſt hurried out of the world by the never-ebbing tide of ſickneſs and affliction.

There appears to me to be ſomething awfully ſublime, and morally inſtructive, in tracing, in imagination, the progreſs of a river

a river from its ſource among the mountains, until it ſhall diſembogue its contents into the diſtant ſea.

The country through which the Thames wanders in its delightful courſe, is rather remarkable for the amenity than the grandeur of its objects. No reſounding cataracts oppoſe the current of its ſtream; no ſhadowy mountains reflect their elevations in its waters; no rocks are ſeen, upon its margins, to repreſent the ruins of caſtles and of caves: the circumjacent ſcenes appear to borrow their charms from the tranquil temper of the gentle element, and no diſcordant ſounds diſturb the quiet of its borders; but in their ſtead, are daily heard, the flocks, the doves, the lark, the thruſh, the linnet, and the wren; and ſo ſoon as the night ſhall have invited them back to the hanging wood, the nodding grove, the buſhy copſe, or brambles on the heath, the nightingales continue the rural concert, and breathe their tender lamentations through the night.

How very different muſt be thoſe ſcenes which the borders of the Volga furniſh! How numerous muſt be the diverſity of nations, of manners, and of tongues! How many of the regions unexplored; and the productions of the water, and the land, unſeen, unnoticed, and undefined! And if we compare their fiſheries with thoſe of the Thames, and contraſt the productions of both in all their varieties of value, and of ſize, from the beluga to the gudgeon, how much muſt the one riſe in ſublimity over the more diminutive inhabitants of our commercial and quieſcent ſtream! a ſtream, however, ſuperiorly important from its commerce, its conſequence, and wealth.

The very idea of interſecting a region of ſo much wildneſs and extent, when compared to the Thames, which only waters one kingdom, and upon whoſe banks one language alone is ſpoken, is ſufficient to create reflections of a particular and inquiſitive caſt.

How wonderful is the difference between the whale and the ſprat, the ſturgeon and the

the minim! and how greatly benevolent is that Power who has varied their dimenſions for the uſe of man!

Some other picturesque images which are obſervable in the time of crop, will fall in in their proper place, in the courſe of theſe remarks. I ſhall therefore turn to a deſcription of the proceſs of the cane, from the cutting of the field to its depoſit at the wharf; a deſcription which being merely mechanical, muſt of courſe, to thoſe not intereſted in its manufacture, be dull and tedious, but which I am unwilling to omit, as it ſeems to be a connective part of my preſent ſubject, and which may not perhaps be altogether unacceptable to thoſe whoſe purſuits and occupations have not ever led them to the diſcuſſion of ſuch a plant, although every one is more or leſs indebted to its uſe, in either its raw, or in its refined and perfect ſtate.

As

As faſt as the canes are cut, they are thrown aſide into different rows; the ſugar-canes into one heap, and the rum-canes into another. A gang of negroes, not equal in ſtrength to the cutters, ſucceed theſe laſt, collect them into bundles, and tie them with cane-bands together, that they may be convenient to load, and in readineſs for the mules, if the land be too hilly, which convey them to the carts; but if the elevations be not too ſteep and inacceſſible, the wains can work upon the pieces, and in that caſe they go forward with their loads to the mill, by which means much time is ſaved, and expedition given: and I muſt here obſerve, that theſe animals ſo patient and ſo induſtrious upon all occaſions, are generally too much worked at the beginning of the crop, and more eſpecially at night; nor is there ſufficient care taken that the pads be well ſtuffed, the crooks be prevented from chafing their ſhoulders and backs, and that their wounds be carefully and daily examined, as well as dreſt.

It is of great comfort and conſequence likewiſe to the cattle, that their necks be not too much rubbed by the friction of the yokes, that the wheels be kept conſtantly greaſed, and that the draught of the wains be made regular and eaſy.

The cattle-men and the mule-boys, the traſh-carriers, the feeders, and the watch-men who attend the pens, ſhould be all allowed warm clothing in crop-time, as a protection againſt that cold which the former experience upon the hills, and the latter about the works, and in their different chilly ſituations at night.

An European, who would be almoſt diſſolved were he to work beneath the vertical ardours of a tropic ſun, does not always conſider, when he expreſſes his ſurpriſe that the negroes ſhould be obliged to labour in ſuch an intenſity of heat, that the climate is congenial to their natural feelings, and that the careful benevolence of Providence has thickened their ſkins, to enable them

to bear what would otherwiſe be inſufferable: he is too apt to judge of their conſtitutions and feelings by his own, and does not ſeem to conſider that, if they were removed to England, and were obliged to abide the pelting of the hail, the fleeces of the ſnow, or the rigours of the froſt, their powers would be uſeleſs, as their exertions would be numbed; and that *their* ſituation then, from a contraſt of the region to that in which they were born, would be more deplorable and dangerous than *his* would be, if obliged to labour in the higher latitudes.

That the real work of the negroes is not ſo violent, nor continued ſo long in the day without relaxation, as that of the peaſants in England, may be collected from the interruptions which are occaſioned by the frequent and heavy continuance of the rains which deluge the country for ſo many afternoons in the year, and from other accidental intermiſſions of labour, which may be derived from cuſtom and from climate.

Their

Their exertions out of crop, are ſeldom required for more than thirteen hours in the day; and the remainder of the four-and-twenty, the generality of them may conſider as their own, and may diſpoſe of them in any manner agreeable to their inclinations.

Happy would it be for them, and for the domeſtic comforts of the country, could they be taught, or encouraged to take delight in, any ſedentary employments, when they have ſo many vacant hours, in the rainy ſeaſons, that might be attended with profit to themſelves, with uſe to their families, or that might confine them, with good-humoured induſtry and patient retirement to the pleaſing care and ſober management of their children, and thence introduce a domeſtic leſſon of internal quiet and ſubordination, inſtead of wandering abroad themſelves from plantation to plantation, making thoſe idle and worthleſs who naturally look up to them for example and for conduct, and thus

import drunkenneſs and theft, and a long liſt of minor vices that debilitate their conſtitutions, and lay the foundation of impiety, diſeaſe, and death.

A perſon who has not been uſed to the labour of negroes in our colonies, would be at firſt ſurpriſed to obſerve in how ſhort a ſpace of time a good gang of able labourers will get through a piece of ſtanding canes, particularly if they be ratoons, and thoſe be rather ſhabby, and which are commonly the firſt that are cut at the commencement of the harveſt, as they will anſwer full as well as thoſe from which more produce is expected, for a trial of the mill, the heating of the coppers, and as a partial experiment of the yielding of the canes.

This valuable plant requires great care and labour to cut: if ſtanding up and well traſhed, not ſo much as when it is leaning, and has more ſtraw upon it; and in this ſtate a very little is required, when compared with

with what it will demand when entirely lodged and flat upon the ground. When it happens to be in this ſituation, it muſt be diſencumbered of the traſh; and it is often obliged to be dug out of the earth, into which the eyes may perhaps have ſhot, and from which may have grown out a number of ſuckers of conſiderable thickneſs and length.

The firſt cut is made at the top of the plant, if it be not out of reach on account of its height: in the latter caſe, the chop is made at the bottom; the leaves are divided from the ſtem; and the latter will require, in proportion to its growth, one or two ſeparations beſide.

Some of the tops are carried to the pens, where, mixed with ſalt, or indeed without it, for I have never found it of any uſe, it makes excellent food for the mules: what are left upon the piece, will ſerve as fodder for the cattle. The traſh remains upon the ground, to anſwer the future purpoſes of manure; to preſerve the land moiſt and

cool during the dryneſs of the crop, and to prevent the weeds from getting too much a-head, before the young ſtoles ſhall have had a clearing, and covered the ground.

So ſoon as the canes are cut and tied, they are carried upon very hilly and ſteep eſtates, by mules; upon flat land and eaſy elevations, by wains: the burdens are depoſited at the front of the mill-houſe, into which two or three weakly or new negroes convey them, and where they are placed upon a table, or frame, from which the feeders can with conveniency remove them, and afterwards inſert between the canes of the mill, by which, and the revolution of the rollers, their juice is expreſſed.

The liquor is conveyed through a wooden gutter, ſome of which are lined with lead, to the receiver in the boiling-houſe; and from thence, as before obſerved, into the clarifier, where it has its temper of lime: it is there ſkimmed and cleaned;

cleaned; and when ſufficiently purified, it is handed forward to another copper of a proportionable diminution of ſize, and ſo on to the ſmaller coppers, and laſt of all to the teach, where the liquor begins to granulate; and from whence, when ſufficiently boiled, it is diſcharged into the coolers, of which three, that are capable of holding as much ſugar as will fill a hogſhead each, that is to ſay, as much as will receive four or five times the contents of the teach, if it be of ninety gallons, are as many as will be found neceſſary upon any plantation that does not work more than a ſingle ſide of coppers; if both ſides be worked, the different utenſils muſt be conſequently doubled.

Theſe coolers were formerly compoſed of copper; but they are now almoſt univerſally made of wood, and cedar is the beſt that can be applied to this purpoſe.

When the ſugar is ſufficiently cool and firm to admit of removal, or potting, it is

conveyed by baſons of copper, or by pails, into the curing-houſe adjoining, where empty hogſheads are placed upon the ranges for its reception.

The ſkimmings, or the dirt and traſh that riſe to the ſurface of the coppers, are conducted to the ſtill-houſe, where mixed with dunder, or the ſediment of the ſtills, molaſſes, water, and oftentimes the juice of the tainted canes—it is, with theſe different ingredients, commixed and ſet, and then left in the ciſterns to ferment.

When the fermentation has ſubſided, the liquor is racked off into the ſtill; and when it deſcends in ſpirit, this firſt running is called low wines, and is depoſited in a large butt conſtructed for this particular purpoſe; from whence it is again paſſed into another veſſel of ſmaller dimenſions; and at the next condenſation and fall of the vapour, it comes out rum.

The crop of ſpirit will depend much upon the ſtate of the canes, and the care with which thoſe that have been tainted, ſhall have been ſelected: the general average is deemed to be one puncheon of rum for every two hogſheads of ſugar; but that ſtill-houſe, as I before obſerved, and muſt again repeat, is unſkilfully managed, or negligently attended, or there muſt be ſome particular property in the cane, or in the land upon which it has been cultivated, if it do not give a more conſiderable proportion.

The more ſugar is regularly made in a week, the more ſteady will be likewiſe the quantity of rum; and as the firſt is the principle of the laſt, and does not admit of any deſcription but what may be taken from the mechanical proceſs of diſtillery, I ſhall return to a further account of the manufacture of ſugar.

The time in which it may be ſaid that a hogſhead of ſugar is ſufficiently cured, will

will depend upon many circumſtances; upon more perhaps than may be ſuppoſed by thoſe who only follow the common proceſs, and who loiter on from week to week, and making with the ſame exertions the ſame quantity of produce, of the ſame ſtaple and complexion, with the ſame indifference and inattention, have not a competency of practice, or a reſource of ideas, to diſcover how the crop may be accelerated, the ſugar improved, the labour relieved; or how the mill without ſtraining, the negroes without toil, or the cattle without being puſhed, may be kept continually at work with moderation and with profit.

The ſugar will cure much faſter in dry than it will in moiſt, and in moiſt than it will in rainy, weather; and the more air is introduced into a curing-houſe (and air I ſhould prefer to heat), the ſooner will it be fit for market: but to ſend it down to the barguadier before it is ſufficiently dry, is unprofitable; for the motion of the carts will

will make it give; and hence thoſe molaſſes will run, and be waſted upon the roads, which might have aſſiſted the ſtill-houſe, and have augmented the crop of rum. Some ſugar will cure in three weeks or a month; and ſome will not be dry in double that time; and that which ſhall appear to be firm while the weather is dry, will become ſoft with an alteration of the ſeaſons.

It was formerly the cuſtom, and it perhaps upon ſome plantations at preſent too much prevails, to have not only one or two hair-cloth ſtrainers in the receiver, but one of wire, between every two or three coppers; but this practice having been found uſeleſs, began, ſome years ago, to be generally exploded: it is an expence and trouble that can, and ought, in my opinion, to be diſpenſed with; for, if the liquor be not properly cleanſed in the clarifier, it will be in vain to expect its purification in the other veſſels through which it ſhall paſs. A wicker

baſket

baſket at the entrance of the receiver, and another to catch the ſcales of the teach, or any other filth that may happen to get into the ſugar after it is boiled and delivered from the laſt copper, are as many as any boiling-houſe will find it neceſſary to uſe. Expence and labour are too often augmented, when in fact they ought to be particularly guarded againſt upon every plantation. As to the broken traſh that may find its way from the mill-houſe to the great copper, that is of little conſequence; nay, I do not know but it forwards, in ſome meaſure, the clarification of the liquor.

If the ſtrainers be not conſtantly kept clean, which thoſe who are acquainted with the natural indolence of the negroes will of courſe imagine to be not always the caſe, they will require an acidity which, when communicated to the ſugar, will be particularly prejudicial at leaſt, if it do not abſolutely prevent its granulation: beſides, as theſe ſtrainers are conſiderably elevated above

above the level of the coppers, the negroes muſt neceſſarily be obliged to raiſe their arms in proportion, in the delivery of the liquor; and hence of courſe the labour will be increaſed by the demand of additional ſtrength: whereas every poſſible plan ſhould be adopted to diminiſh, rather than to increaſe their bodily exertions; and of this poſition, if the overſeer do not feel immediately the force, the planter ultimately will.

The ladle with which the ſugar is delivered, being at the extremity of a long lever, is in itſelf particularly heavy, but which, when full of liquor, muſt be conſequently more ſo; and if it require ſtrength and practice to forward it, upon a level, from one copper to another, even when the negroes are juſt come upon their ſpell, and conſequently freſh and vigorous—how diſtreſſing muſt they find it, if the labour be increaſed with their weakneſs, and if they be obliged, when weary and wrought down, to raiſe an augmented weight to an additional

tional height! and how diſcouraging, when it is abſolutely known to be a work, not of neceſſity, but ſupererrogation!

As the boilers at the different coppers, when flush, or even partially boiling, are obliged to be upon their feet to attend them at leaſt twelve hours out of the four-and-twenty, if there be not a ſufficient quantity of negroes upon the eſtate to make up three ſpells, and thus relieve them—it is ſaid that they often ſuffer from the hardneſs of the ſtones, or the firmneſs of the ground, upon which they ſtand, and that hence diſorders of the legs are frequently induced; and this ſuppoſition, I am afraid, is but too well founded. If mats were therefore ſpread upon the ſtanding-places by the ſide of the coppers, and if even temporary ſeats were ſo contrived as not to interfere with the convenience of the work, and upon which they might now and then ſit down to reſt themſelves, when the ſlackneſs of the fire, the want of liquor, or any other accidental circumſtance might

might give a pauſe to labour; it might, I think, be attended with beneficial conſequences.

It was formerly the univerſal cuſtom to introduce curers, or thatch-ſticks, about ſeven in number, into the hogſheads, previouſly to the potting of the ſugar, in order to form drains for the diſcharge of the molaſſes: the conſequenee was, that a hard cruſt was ſoon formed around the ſides, and the ſyrups were of courſe rather confined in the intermediate ſpaces, than ſuffered to depurate. Theſe ſticks are, I believe, now almoſt entirely exploded; the ſugar certainly cures full as well, if not better, without them; the molaſſes will find their own out-lets; and, let the caſks be ever ſo tight, they will work a ready way through the crevices and the knots of the timber of which they are made; and that hogſhead that goes full from the plantation, will ſtand a better chance of arriving ſo at the barguadier: as the motion of the carts will naturally break the

cruſt

cruſt around the vacant *holes* which the curers had occaſioned; and of courſe, when *they* become filled up, the caſk cannot have the appearance of being full.

Some people repack and ram their hogſheads at the barguadier, by which means the weight of each will be much augmented; but then, is there not much waſte occaſioned by thus ſtarting the produce from one to another? Is there not much pilferage and trouble obſerved in this practice? Is not the grain conſiderably broken, and hence the molaſſes ſet adraining? Are they not more apt to be ſcrewed, and injured on board of ſhip, than more light, and hence more ſafe, as more convenient caſks could poſſibly be?

The common ſize of a ſugar-hogſhead is forty-two inches in height, and thirty-ſix acroſs the head; and it is not an eaſy matter to make one of thoſe dimenſions, when well cured and quite full, to contain more than fifteen hundred weight of good

good ſugar: if filled with that which is manufactured upon hilly and dry land, it will very ſeldom turn out ſo much. If therefore two hundred weight more be forced into the caſk, already full, it is eaſy to conceive how much the hoops and the ſtaves will be ſtrained, and conſequently how liable to be broken in the cartage to the wharf, or when ſcrewed into the hold of a ſhip.

We will ſuppoſe that one hundred tons of produce ſhall be conveyed from a plantation to market, in caſks of the common ſize, and ſhall be ſhipped without being opened and filled up. If that quantity be ſtarted into other hogſheads, the total weight muſt naturally be diminiſhed by waſte, theft, and drainage: beſides, if this practice be adopted to ſave ſtaves, hoops, or wharfage, the ſuppoſed gain will be found not only trifling, but fallacious; if to ſave wharfage, it is true that eighteen hundred weight of ſugar will not pay

more than fourteen hundred: but I muſt inſiſt, that where it ſhall be re-packed, the proportion of the original hundred tons will be ultimately found to turn out leſs. A planter cannot be deceived in his amount of produce, if he will ſtrike an average of ſixteen hundred weight upon all his ſugar made in the crop.

Having made many experiments myſelf (and experiments in Jamaica are generally attended with expence and loſs), I am able, in ſome meaſure, to ſpeak from conviction; and I do not know whether tierces, three of which ought to contain as much as two very large hogſheads, will not deliver their contents more free from loſs and damage, in England, than caſks of any dimenſion whatever.

The hogſheads ſhould be certainly well cured, and quite full, before they leave the plantation: they ſhould be carefully and ſubſtantially made; and if ſome additional

hoops

hoops were to be added, to make them more compact and ſtrong, the planter, as well as the merchant, and the owners of veſſels, would be gainers by it.

Some overſeers pot their ſugar extremely cold; and ſome, on the contrary, comparatively hot. Both practices, I think, are wrong: the heat ſhould be moderate and equal; and this may be eaſily effected, provided the coolers be of proper number, convenience, and ſize. Cold ſugar put upon hot, or hot upon cold, are improper; nor do I think the pains that are ſometimes taken to varniſh over the tops of the hogſheads with that which is in an almoſt liquid ſtate, or covering them with a wet blanket, are found to be otherwiſe than deceptive.

Of the quantity of loads of canes that will be ſufficient, when expreſſed, to fill a hogſhead, the calculations muſt be various, and muſt depend upon ſoil, ſitua-

tion, and climate; and after theſe, upon experience, ſtrength and induſtry. Upon ſtrong, hilly land, they require invariably leſs than they do upon the plains where the juice is not ſo much concocted, and conſequently not ſo rich: upon the former I have known the liquor contained in eight cart-loads of canes, ſufficient, when boiled, to fill a hogſhead; when upon the flat land of the ſame eſtate, it has taken at leaſt twenty.

Of the number of gallons of liquor to return ſixteen hundred weight of ſugar, it is likewiſe impoſſible to fix a general rule of eſtimation, as this will likewiſe depend upon the circumſtances above deſcribed: but then too, as the juice of the canes upon hilly land is more rich, ſo will, of courſe, a leſs conſiderable number of gallons make a hogſhead, than what will be found to do upon flat land; and even upon that of this laſt deſcription, it muſt vary according to the qualities of the ſoil, the exact perfec-

tion

tion in which the canes are cut, and the celerity and judgment with which the liquor is boiled.

I have known it take upon ſome eſtates, and in ſome years, from three to five thouſand gallons of liquor to make a hogſhead of ſugar; and at other times it has not required eighteen hundred; and upon hilly land I have known a hogſhead of ſugar made from thirteen hundred gallons, when ſixteen hundred would have been conſidered as very extraordinary yielding. In proportion as the caſk exceeds eighteen hundred gallons of liquor, the yielding will become comparatively bad; and of courſe the leſs it takes below this proportion, the more favourable will the yielding be; ſo that, if the canes at the beginning of the crop do not exceed two thouſand gallons, the overſeer need not complain, but may puſh forward his harveſt with the reaſonable hope that the canes will daily continue to yield an addi-

tional quantity of produce, with a reduction of materials.

The more dry the canes are, the leſs liquor will they of courſe yield; but then it will go farther in proportion of ſugar; I am, however, of opinion, that quantity is better than quality; and hence it is, that flat eſtates make more *per* acre than the hilly lands *can* do.

Upon ſome eſtates the crop will depend upon the proportion of plants; and upon others, almoſt entirely upon ratoons: and they will even make more from a ſecond or third, than they will from the firſt cut; and there are others that will hardly bear more than a plant, inaſmuch as the firſt will be hardly worth a cleaning.

Ratoon canes will, upon all properties, and in all ſeaſons, generally make the beſt produce; yet are there exceptions to this rule. The ſugar that is manufactured

factured from plants, if upon ſtrong land, is, I think, of a better grain, though not perhaps of ſo fair a complexion as that which is produced from *ratoons*; and, in conſequence of its texture, will be more heavy at the barguadier: what the *latter* therefore gains in colour, it is known to loſe in weight.

Of the ſpecific yielding of canes, it is difficult to determine, as this will vary upon all ſoils, with the ſeaſons, with the cultivation, and with the time of cutting.

If plant-canes make upon an average two hogſheads an acre round, it is uncommonly great yielding; if an hogſhead and a half, it is more than one eſtate in ten will give; if only one, it may be a ſaving average.

An hogſhead an acre from ratoons, is what very few pieces upon an eſtate will yield: three quarters is a good propor-

tion; and half a hogſhead, I fear, will be above the common medium: and theſe proportions, within my experience, I have ſeldom known, for a number of years, upon the groſs, exceeded.

Some properties have been known to make a hogſhead for every acre of canes that has been cut; but as ſuch favorable yielding has not come more than once under my knowledge, I am diſpoſed to think it ſingular: and I have heard of others that have made an hogſhead of ſugar, and a puncheon of rum, for every ſlave and head of cattle upon the plantation: but here I muſt obſerve, that I have taken it upon hear-ſay, but have not had an opportunity to ſubſtantiate the fact.

Of the value of an hogſhead of ſugar, much muſt depend upon the quality of the produce, and upon the ſize of the caſk: ſixteen pounds ſterling is a good price, in the time of peace; but in that of war, the firſt muſt be bad, and the laſt light, if

if it do not exceed twenty; and ſome have been known to reach, if not to nett, more than double this laſt-mentioned ſum.

If a puncheon of rum ſhall give leſs than ten pounds, it is barely a ſaving price; but during the laſt war, it frequently produced from fifteen to twenty pounds and upwards. In war-time, Jamaica is the beſt market for ſugar, and London for rum: in the time of peace, I ſhould prefer the former for both: the price is not only better for the firſt article, and the waſte and drainage of the paſſage ſaved; but the ſeller gains twelve pounds of nett ſugar in every hundred weight, and is likewiſe allowed the value of the caſk.

A planter who is independent (but very few are ſo), who ſells his produce in the Iſland, and who pays rum for his contingencies, proviſions, and ſtores, can make one hundred hogſheads of ſugar produce more than *he* can who is obliged to conſign one hundred and fifty to Europe: and

and this is a poſition which cannot, I believe, be controverted.

Having already been too prolix and too minute in my deſcription of the produce of the cane, I ſhall take the liberty, before I deſcribe the continuance and concluſion of the crop, and dwell upon the different qualities of the land upon which this ſingular plant is cultivated, to take notice of ſome images of rural concern which are common at that period of the harveſt, when the operations of ſugar-making are far advanced, when the young canes want a cleaning, the curing-houſe is become full, and the overſeer of conſequence ſends down the produce to the barguadier.

At this time the boilers, the feeders, the mule-boys, and the traſh-carriers, are drawn off from the works, and are ſet-in to clean, and to pull off the firſt traſh from the canes, and to put them into ſuch order as not to require any further attention until the crop ſhall be completely finiſhed.

This

This labour of the field has been already deſcribed in the earlier ſtages of the cane, in the planting-ſeaſon, and admit not of courſe of more variety than has been there explained.

The wains and mules may be, indeed, occaſionally employed, for a few days after the mill is ſtopped, in carting home the rum-canes, or tops for the covering of the traſh-houſes and the negro-huts: the mill may be kept occaſionally about at night, to grind the former, or perhaps during the day, ſhould there be a ſufficient quantity to expreſs: and I cannot help again enforcing the neceſſary obſervance of this practice.

The coopers are now buſily employed in heading-up the hogſheads, making tight the puncheons, and rolling the caſks. The waggons and the carts are attending at the curing-houſe and the ſtill-houſe, to receive their different loads: the firſt of which will in general carry four hogſheads, or five

five puncheons, and are drawn by ten oxen; the latter, two hogſheads, or three puncheons, and are worked by eight; for at the firſt carting-down of the produce, I ſuppoſe the roads to be good and even, the cattle ſtrong, and the weather dry and pleaſant.

There is certainly much animation, as there is much intereſt, in the proſpect of the conveyance of what, in its laſt perfection in the Iſland, was anticipated with ſo much uncertainty and dread; and the man, however little inclined to worldly affairs, cannot help numbering, in imagination, the caſks that paſs before his eyes, particularly as he eſtimates his means by the weight of the loads, and the recurrence of the journey.

You now hear the heavy waggons thundering along the roads, and behold the unwieldy oxen with a momentary exertion increaſe their pace upon the level land, or ſee their motion impelled by the following

lowing impulſe adown the gentle depreſſion of a hill, the chains rattling, the whips ecchoing, and the drivers ſhouting; the duſt now riſing and aſcending in columns, and then like a miſt diſperſing in the air; while the horſes, the herds, and the flocks, diſturbed by the confuſion of ſound, and the approaching uproar, ſcud acroſs the paſtures, and then return and erect their heads, as if in defiance of what ſo late alarmed them; and again recline their necks, and browze the ſcanty paſturage of the land, which appears or white with duſt, or of a ruſſet hue occaſioned by the continued dryneſs of the weather.

When they arrive at the wharf, and the caſks are either rolled into the ſtores or ſheds, or into a convenient ſituation for the boats to receive them, the ſcene is various, lively, and amuſing.

Here ſtand the patient oxen, and the wains or empty or unloading; here a heap of logwood, there a pile of boards, and

on

on one ſide a maſs of ſtaves and ſhingles; while in the intermediate ſpace between that and the ſea is obſerved a confuſion of hogſheads and puncheons rolling out from the different buildings, and by degrees encumbering the wharf, which, projecting into the water, appears to be a prominent feature of the general ſcenery: the ſpiral maſts of the craft on each ſide or riſe or fall, according to the ſwelling or depreſſion of the ſea; while the boats become more and more ſtationary, in proportion to the completion of their loading; and theſe ſail off with a freſh breeze (the waves murmuring under, and breaking around their keels) to the different veſſels that expect them in the harbour, or ſtand off and on to receive the laſt trip of ſtores, or to wait for their paſſengers in the offing.

So ſoon as the firſt beams of the morning are obſerved to glimmer upon, and to illuminate the waves, the canoes are ſeen with emulation to cut the waters, and appear at a diſtance like moving dots upon the boſom

boſom of the ocean. They now attain the ſhipping, and either make their markets on board, or put off again, and are for a time loſt amidſt their ſhadowy hulls, and at laſt appear upon the poliſhed expanſe, and by viſible degrees attain the ſhore. The little veſſels are drawn upon the ſand, and, either protected by ſheds, or covered by the green expanſion of the ſpreading mangrove, reſign the produce of the night, with which the fiſherman enlivens the voluptuary with a diſplay of the jew-fiſh, the hog-fiſh, the ſnapper, or the ſnouk, or contents the more humble appetite with the grunt, the mullet, and the ſprat.

The more opulent fiſhermen are now ſeen to put forth their large canoes, and to ſhoot the heavy ſeine with all its meſhes into the cove; one ſide of which is protected by a tremendous maſs of broken rocks, and richly fringed with a variety of trees; or adorned by rampant ſhrubs and ſpreading weeds, that begin their ſource of vegetation in the different crevices, and

put out and ſpread their bloſſoms and their leaves, in various and fantaſtic ſhoots, acroſs the unequal ſurfaces; or hang, as if enamoured of the quiet and reflecting ſheets of water that are ſpread beneath their penſile withes and gay profuſion, in contraſt to the glittering ſands that are faintly reflected from below.

On the oppoſite ſhore, and riſing with a gentle ſwell from the borders of the ocean, is obſerved a rich and ſhady bank, adorned with groups of trees of enormous height, and depth of foliage; and among their tufted branches is plainly diſtinguiſhed the whiſpering thatch-tree with its fantaſtic ſtem and pendant leaves, which ſeem to arreſt the zephyrs as they paſs, and to allay, by their gentle aſpirations and their tremors, the intenſity of heat which the ſea-breeze, with its firſt viſitation, begins to remove, and which, ſoftly ſtealing over the glaſſy mirror, is ſeen, by degrees, to ruffle its quieſcent ſurface, and to occaſion the up-lifted waves to break in ſhort and frequent

quent ripples upon the beach, or to beat with drowzy murmur againſt, or to waſh the baſes of, the jutting rocks that oppoſe their paſſage to the ſhore.

The bottom of the bay that is formed by the pictureſque projections above deſcribed, appears a curve, behind which a road is elevated above the ſands, which winds among ſhrubs and underwood, that are backed by mountains of an immenſe height, and which are romanticly clothed with a variety of trees, through which no ſun-beam darts to illume their maſſes, and to cheer their glooms. The traveller is now ſeen to aſcend a riſing hill: the eye perceives him at a diſtance: he now follows the beaten track through the embowering lane, in which he is for a minute loſt: he turns, and is obvious again; till at laſt he diſappears, and imagination is left to ſhape his future journey.

The cove which I am endeavouring to deſcribe, preſents one of the moſt tranquil

and pleaſing ſcenes I have ever obſerved; and I have had frequent opportunities of dwelling upon its varieties, ſome of the leading features of which I have only mentioned.

There are ſeveral large rocks that repreſent the ruins of majeſtic bridges, and which guard the entrance into this amphitheatre of beauty; and it is within theſe that I ſuppoſe the fiſhermen to uncoil their nets, to ſearch for riches, where they are ſo bountifully given to patience and to induſtry, in the depths of the ocean; and that they perſevere, with animation and with ſkill, in that occupation which not only procures pleaſure, as it is attended with health, but which likewiſe rewards their labours with profit and abundance, at the ſame time that it adminiſters to the wants and the luxuries of others.

There are but few objects in landſcape-painting, that are more pleaſing than a ſweep

ſweep of waters not too extenſive, and in which is plainly marked the curve of the net, the corks of which, as they float upon the ſurface, are ſeen to riſe or ſink according to the undulations of the wave, and in which the meſhes are obſerved to be reflected, and to cut into angles, as it were, the cryſtals of the ſea. The appearance of the boats from which it is launched, the pictureſque attitudes of their conductors, the ſolemn impreſſions of every thing around, the melancholy gurgling of the ſwell that breaks around the keels, the ſeclusion of the cove, and the tranquillity of the ebb or flow, have ſuch effects upon the lover of Nature, and upon the mind of him who delights in contemplation and retirement, as hardly any other purſuit can ſo particularly and ſo pleaſingly afford.

The ſubject of fiſhing has been a favourite with the beſt of ancient and modern poets; and, indeed, every idea that conducts us to the obſervation of water, in either its quieſcent or ruffled ſtate, is at-

tended with a kind of melancholy pleaſure, whether it be indulged in a morning walk, while the firſt beams of the ſun begin to dance upon the waves, or whether we obſerve the moon to ſilver over the trembling boſom of the waters.

When ev'ning lulls the zephyr's breath to ſleep,
The boat deſcending cuts the placid deep;
Smooth flows the wave, the prow delib'rate glides,
And a deaf murmur ſoothes the gurgling tides.
The breeze, with gentle progreſs, now invades
The tufted woods, and whiſpers 'midſt their ſhades,
Where, perch'd upon ſome branch, or wither'd ſpray,
The feath'ry tribes attune their matin lay:
And now th' increaſing aſpirations reach
The waves that ſcarcely waſh the ſandy beach,
But, ſoon converted into billows, pour
Their breaking ſurges on the ſounding ſhore.

The firſt four lines are taken from one of the Carmina Quadrageſimalia, a publication that is full of variety and claſſic beauty; and the originals of which, while they ſpeak for themſelves, will detect the weakneſs with which they have been tranſlated.

" Cum

" Cum zephyrorum omnis reſidet ſub veſpere flatus,
" Lento deſcendit marmore cymba levis.
" Sternitur unda ſilens latè; ſola æquore toto
" Lenia prolabens murmura prora ciet."

The beginning of the Tenth Cantata of Metaſtaſio, ſeems very appoſite to the obſervations I have ventured to make.

" Già la notte s'avvicina:
" Vieni, o Nice, amato bene,
" Della placida marina
" Le freſch' aure a reſpirar.

" Non ſa dir che ſia diletto
" Chi non pona in queſte arene,
" Or che un lento zeffiretto
" Dolcemente increſpa il mar."

The night already draweth near:
Come then, my Nicey, come, my dear,
And from the ſtill, tranſparent ſeas,
Inhale the freſh and balmy breeze.

Thou canſt not tell with what delight
Th' inviting ſands reflect the light,
How plaintively the zephyrs ſigh
To curling billows their reply.

I can, even at this diſtance, almoſt fancy myſelf to be walking over the ſilver ſands

that glitter upon the ſequeſtered beach above deſcribed; that I obſerve in my walk the wains deſcending from a neighbouring hill; and that I behold, at a little diſtance, a romantic and a ruined wharf, that is emboſomed in a rock, and hung over with withes and flaunting bowers, to which the age and majeſty of the overhanging trees have given protection and growth.

I now obſerve the fiſhermen, in imagination, to thread a path among the brambles and the buſhes, in queſt of ſome retired ſpot upon which they may repoſe and roaſt their fiſh, unſeen by curioſity, and undiſturbed by noiſe, except it be the flutter of parrots, or of pigeons, among the branches around; or the ſcream of the aquatic birds that are alternately ſwimming, or diving among the rocks; or of the numerous flocks that leave the mountains in the morning, or of thoſe that come from the diſtant ſeas, to rooſt upon the foreſt-boughs by night.

While ſome are faſtening their canoes, and ſtretching their nets upon poles to dry, there are others employed in bearing the finny loads, and ſome in carrying wood, or preparing the fire for the gratifications of hunger, the comforts of warmth, or the ſocial converſe that the pipe occaſions.

The ruddy flames are now ſeen aſpiring among the buſhes; the adjoining rocks are conſcious of the blaze, and the ſea returns its cheerful luſtre.

There is a ſomething in the drawing of a ſeine, that occaſions a pleaſing impatience; and the variety of fiſhes, of different ſizes and kinds, that are taken within its ſweep, cannot fail to intereſt our curioſity, as well as frequently to excite our feelings.

When a ſhoal of mullets is about to be incloſed in the net, the ſea appears to be alive: they dart like lightning from the water; they leap over the incloſure; and

having regained their liberty, they ſhoot down into the depths of the ocean.

The lines are now drawn with gentleneſs and caution: a reſiſtance is felt: a turtle is now ſeen floating upon the ſurface; it plunges again to the ſands: the fiſh of a middling ſize are caught in the meſhes; the ſmaller fry eſcape; the larger ſpecies are taken out, and brought on ſhore; and the poor unreſiſting turtle is caught at the bottom of the ſeine; and while he ſighs in captivity, his luſcious weight is doomed to ſatisfy the unfeeling glutton, or is ſent to England as a gift to wealth and independency.

I cannot refrain from conveying the ideas of fiſhing *from* the ſea, to follow and deſcribe this occupation *in* the rivers; which will, I fear, branch out theſe remarks into an inordinate length, and which may rather diſguſt, than amuſe, the patient and liberal attention of my readers.

From

From the latter end of February to the beginning of April, if the weather ſhall have been, as it commonly is at this period, at all dry, the rivers will be low, and hence more convenient for fiſhing; and the manner in which the calapavres are taken, as I have ſeen it practiſed, preſents a very rural and a pleaſing picture.

A dam is made, before the commencement of the ſport, acroſs ſome particular portion of the river, by which it is known, from experience, that the fiſh muſt paſs; and at the bottom of this dam, and at given diſtances, are depoſited a number of fiſh-pots, into which thoſe calapavres dart, which do not venture to throw themſelves above the ſurface of the water.

The net is launched into the deeper parts of the river above, and is gently drawn adown the current by the perſevering ſtrength and labour of the negroes, who are, in ſome places, obliged to dive, and to remain a conſiderable time below, to clear

clear the weights, when entangled by logs of wood, or rocks, or weeds; or to draw it, with conſiderable fatigue and exertion, when ſwimming through the deeper baſons of the ſtream. Theſe flounce on one ſide, and thoſe diſturb the ſilence of the banks on the other; while ſome remain behind, to ſee that the corks proceed without impediment, and that the finny tribes do not eſcape their vigilance and toil.

So ſoon as they come to a convenient ſpot to incloſe and take their game, a pleaſing ſcene of contention is obſerved: the waters are diſturbed, and the timid inhabitants dart here and there: ſome eſcape from the toils, but are perceived, by the eye of vigilance and diſtruſt, to ſwim with velocity through the ſhallows which a ledge of rocks has made: they now come to a narrow paſſage, in which their flight is made uncertain by their fears; when all at once, with a ſudden ſtroke, the gagged harpoon arreſts their courſe, diſcolours the waters with their blood, and throws them

out

out the writhing victims to a want of cunning, and a ſacrifice to the arts of man.

The fiſh are ordained to bear their ſufferings without the ſighs or murmurs of complaint; and may even teach the philoſopher this leſſon—to be reſigned and mute in death.

Who can behold, within the ſilver brook,
The worm convuls'd upon the barbed hook;
Or ſee, with brutal and with fond deſire,
The gaudy perch in agonies expire;
Or, without tenderneſs of mind, behold
The panting carp reſign his ſcales of gold;
And which, when once it has foregone its breath,
Regales the glutton by the pangs of death?

" The verieſt beetle that we tread upon,
" In corp'ral ſuff'rance feels as great a pang
" As when a giant dies."

What a ſublime idea is this of Shakeſpeare! How very pathetic, and how true! He felt, he wrote like man: but who can humaniſe the brute?

The

The net is now reduced from a large ſweep, into an apparent oval: the fiſhermen are all attentive; they drag with caution: a fiſh is ſeen to occaſion the corks a momentary tremor; and down at once a diver plunges: the ſilver ſcales of another are juſt ſeen to glimmer in the waters; a ſecond deſcends, and ſecures his prize: a third is ſtruggling in the meſhes; and a third negro arreſts it by the gills, and throws it gaſping on the ſhore. Some, more expert than others, will bring up one in each hand; and others will aſcend with their prey, convulſed in agonies, between their teeth: and I have even known a fiſherman call out to his comrades, to ſeize upon one that was ſtruggling beneath his feet.

The net is cloſed, and its contents examined: the ſmaller fiſh, as before deſcribed, are taken; the larger have eſcaped: the fiſh-pots are ſearched, and in ſome are two or three enormous calapavres found, which were taken in their endeavours to eſcape.

The

The dam is repaired, the pots re-ſet, and the ſeine is carried down to a lower part of the ſtream.

The river is now ſeen to tumble over a ledge of rocks, into the ſides of which it has drilled a ſucceſſion of caverns. The negroes dive into, and explore the ſubterraneous retreats, nor heed the reſounding cataract that thunders over head, or that engulphs them in the haſty vortex below.

A head is ſeen to emerge from the depth of waters, and the voice gives a promiſe of abundance of game: it ſuddenly deſcends again into the noiſy element, but ſoon riſes with a double confirmation of hope, and vigilance is accordingly proportioned to the expectations of ſucceſs.

A fiſh is driven from the hole in the rock: it aſcends the cataract; it cuts its way with precipitation, but its ſcales are ſeen: the net is turned to receive him, ſhould

ſhould he eſcape the aquatic chaſe: the negroes dive at once, and follow him into the depths below: they drive him *here*, and they overtake him *there:* he endeavours to elude them, but daſhes upon the lair, and is ſecured and taken.

The game being now driven from one part of the river to another, they at laſt take refuge in a deep and capacious hole, which being encumbered with ſtumps and buſhes, will not admit of the drawing of the ſeine, but which is in conſequence ſtretched out to guard the avenues, and to prevent a too ſudden eſcape.

It is in ſuch a ſituation, that the ſkill, the labour, and the perſeverance of the negroes, are the moſt obſervable: and it is amazing how adroit and ſucceſsful they are found to be. They may be abſolutely ſaid not only to intimidate, but to drive the fiſhes from their natural element; for if they cannot take them by hand from the meſhes

of

of the net, on account of the many obſtructions in the holes to which they retreat, they will ſtill, by perſeverance and alarm, expel them from their holds, and drive them into ſhallow water, where they may be more eaſily purſued and overtaken.

I have ſeen a negro dive into the chambers of a rock, and in a few minutes bring out at leaſt a dozen mullets, and ſometimes one in each hand; while others, who were not acquainted with the ſtream, could not, with the aſſiſtance of flies and nets, even capture a ſolitary one.

Of all the diverſions in Jamaica, this ſpecies of fiſhing was that in which I took the moſt delight, as the river in which this ſport was purſued, preſented at every turn ſome pleaſing or romantic view.

In ſome places the waters were ſeen to ſhine among the branches of the diſtant trees; in others, to glide with a quick and noiſy

noiſy courſe between adjoining hills; were here collected in a deep and capacious baſon; and lower down were ſeen to precipitate themſelves in ſucceſſive and reſounding falls, and thus continued to vary their courſe and their appearance, until they became almoſt ſtagnant to the ſight, and hardly ſeemed to creep amidſt the arches of the bridge, or to waſh the ruſhes and the graſs that grew ſpontaneouſly upon their borders.

Not far from the above-mentioned river is another very ſtrikingly romantic, from the blackneſs of its ſtream, the mango-trees that darken its ſurface, and the roots of which are ſingular and fantaſtic in their growth and appearance; and to add to the awful impreſſions of the ſcene, the formidable alligator is often obſerved to ſun himſelf upon the banks, or to float an apparent log upon the heavy and unwholeſome waters. The land through which this lazy current flows, is correſpondent

reſpondent to its ſeemingly peſtiferous current, and is the nurſery and the aſylum of toads, of ſand-flies, and muſquitoes; and is not calculated for the reſidence of any animals but ſuch as are expreſſive of ſickneſs and diſguſt: and yet the mud-fiſh is found in the higheſt perfection, in this lethargic ſtream; and the delicious crab is fattened in thoſe moraſſes with which it is on every ſide ſurrounded. Thus Nature, benevolent in every thing, vouchſafes to make that land which is not fit for the cultivation of man, to produce ſpontaneouſly, and in abundance, not only the comforts, but the luxuries of life.

While the wains are carrying down the produce to the barguadier, it may eaſily be imagined how many ſituations they muſt paſs, that are beautiful from retirement, delightful from the lapſe of rivers and the windings of the roads, magnificent from mountains and from rocks, tremendous from the roaring of torrents and the head-

long fall of cataracts, or ſublime from the extremities of diſtance, the waſhings of the ſurge, and the interminable confines of the ocean.

In ſome parts are obſerved temporary hovels for the logwood-chippers, whoſe axes are heard to reſound from the depths of the wood, and who, divided into different groups, and traverſing the glooms in various directions, preſent a ſcene of buſtle and variety, that would not diſgrace a better deſcription, nor be unworthy of the ſketches of an artiſt.

Some are felling the heavy timber, and ſome with their bills are lopping the branches; while others, ſitting upon the roots or ſtumps, are chipping off the bark, while their children are ſcrambling in little parties around them.

The huts that are erected for this purpoſe, are removed from place to place, according

according to the convenience of labour; and wherever ſituated, have a very ſimple and rural appearance. On the ſides of the roads are heaped-up the wood as faſt as chipped, and where it lies in readineſs for the waggons and the carts, and with which they ſhould be loaded while the weather continues dry; for ſo ſoon as the rains ſet-in, from the frequency of their journies to and from the different wharfs, they are very ſoon cut up, and not only made diſtreſſingly heavy, but very often almoſt impaſſable.

So ſoon as all the produce ſhall be carted down, that is ſufficiently cured, it becomes neceſſary to puſh on the remainder of the crop, while the weather continues favourable, and for fear that the canes ſhould ſuffer from drought.

If the rains do not ſet in until the latter end of April, but the country be in the mean time refreſhed by temporary ſhowers, the harveſt will, by that time,

draw very near to a concluſion; but if the ſeaſons ſhould begin about this period, it will be prudent to draw off the negroes to the ſupply of the old, or a plantation of new canes; which, if completed with expedition, and a few dry weeks ſhould ſupervene, the proceſs of ſugar-making will ſoon be terminated; and the planter ſhould think himſelf fortunate in having had ſo favourable a year.

If the crop ſhall be finiſhed in April, and all the following month ſhall happen to be dry, very little produce will then be left upon the ranges of the curing-houſe, or in the ſtill-houſe; and of courſe the cattle will be much relieved, when the rains ſhall be heavy and continual: and it is therefore of infinite conſequence that the mill ſhould be put about as early in the year as poſſible, that the heavy part of the harveſt may be finiſhed while the weather is dry and favourable, the produce carried down while the roads are good, and that the canes, as before obſerved, may have

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an early cleaning. It is certainly better to loſe a little at the beginning of the crop, than to run the riſk of loſing much at the end: beſides, that eſtate which is late in its operations one year, will be of conſequence ſomewhat backward the next.

The proceſs of ſugar-making is certainly pleaſing when the weather is favourable, and the canes are yielding well: and an eſtate that makes two hundred hogſheads of ſugar, in favourable ſeaſons, one year with another, is boiling at the rate of fifteen hogſheads a week; and other properties, more or leſs, according to their contraction or extent; but when the contrary happens, no operation can be more dull and tedious.

When the oxen are creeping with a ſcarcely-perceptible motion through the deep and heavy intervals, or their necks are ſhaken and their ſhoulders wrung by the irregular and diſtreſſing draught of the wains through the large and ſlippery ruts; or when their progreſs is impeded by the

immenſe ſtones which have been rolled in to pave thoſe places that were uncommonly bad, and from which the rains have waſhed the mould, and the wheels ſo conſtantly removed them—when they labour under ſuch diſadvantages as theſe, at the riſk of their limbs, if not their lives, a few paltry hogſheads of ſugar will hardly make amends for their diſtreſs, or for the other loſſes that are the conſequence of a late and tedious harveſt.

At the ſetting-in of the rains, every thing about the works looks idle, cold, and cheerleſs: the negroes are indolent and uncomfortable; the mules droop, and the carts are very ſlow in the depoſit of their burdens. Sometimes, perhaps, for a whole day together, there is only one ſolitary load of canes to be ſeen at the mill: it often waits many hours together for a ſcanty ſupply: the coppers are not half full of liquor; and that perhaps is ſobbing over a declining fire, or perhaps all but one or two are entirely empty, and the boilers lounging

lounging about, or fallen aſleep. The ſugar begins to give; the curing-houſe is wet and clammy; the mill-yard is full of traſh and filth; and in ſhort the face of Nature, and the works of man, ſeem to put on a melancholy change.

At this uncomfortable concluſion of the harveſt, and amidſt the pauſes which the delay of canes ſo conſtantly occaſions, there are impreſſions that awaken the mind to a particular caſt of reflection, and in which, when contraſted with the lately regular and active ſcene, I have very frequently indulged.

There is ſomething extremely affecting, when there is but little water upon the wheel, in obſerving its revolving motion, and in attending to the melancholy murmur of the rills that gently fall from one bucket into another; while perhaps ſome poor afflicted mourner is heard, in one corner of the mill-houſe, pouring out her complaints in gentle ſighs

and falling tears, in ſad reſponſes to the lingering drops; and while ſhe reſts upon her empty baſket, and lives perhaps unfriended, unconnected, and unnoticed, upon the plantation, the thoughts of her diſtant country, her connexions, and her friends, at once ruſh upon her mind, and excite her ſighs into tempeſts, and increaſe to torrents the guſhing of her tears; for, although inſenſibility appears to be the characteriſtic of an African negro, yet are there many who have their feelings as exquiſitely alive to the melting impreſſions of tenderneſs and ſorrow, as thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed by a better fortune, and have not to encounter the diſgraceful perſecution of power, or to bend the neck beneath the humiliating depreſſion of bondage and deſpair.

When the mill is at work at night, there is ſomething affecting in the ſongs of the women who feed it; and it appears ſomewhat ſingular, that all their tunes, if tunes they can be called, are of a plain-

a plaintive caſt. Sometimes you may hear one ſoft, complaining voice; and now a ſecond and a third chime in; and preſently, as if inſpired by the ſolemn impreſſions of night, and by the gloomy objects that are ſuppoſed to dwell around, a full chorus is heard to ſwell upon the ear, and then to die away again to the firſt original tone.

The ſtyle of ſinging among the negroes, is uniform: and this is confined to the women; for the men very ſeldom, excepting upon extraordinary occaſions, are ever heard to join in chorus. One perſon begins firſt, and continues to ſing alone; but at particular periods the others join: there is not, indeed, much variety in their ſongs; but their intonation is not leſs perfect than their time.

A moon-light night upon a plantation is remarkably beautiful, and cauſes every object to aſſume a ſolemn and a romantic appearance. The overſeer's houſe, with the open piazza in front, illuminated by the

the rays which play upon the walls, or dart through the doors and windows; the ſolemn and the ſpreading ſhades which are occaſioned by the works; the reflections of the arches, over which the water is carried to the mill; an immenſe fig-tree, whoſe top is ſilvered with the playful light, whoſe branches receive and divide the rays, and whoſe maſſy ſhadows extend for a conſiderable diſtance upon the ground, and among which a ſolitary ſteer perhaps, having broken from the pens, or ſtrayed from the fattening paſture, is juſt perceived to ſhake his head, impatient of the muſquitoes that ſwarm around—theſe different images cannot fail to contribute their intereſt to the rural ſcenery, and to fix the eye in contemplation of the ſplendid, or in contraſt of the gloomy objects, and to fill the mind with the moſt awful, the moſt ſimple, and the moſt tender impreſſions.

The contemplative man is enamoured of night; and whenever he directs his regard,

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and elevates his thoughts, to that diſtant and ſtupendous vault in which the ſilver moon then rides triumphant in her zenith, and by her proximity to earth eclipſes the luſtre of the more diſtant ſtars, and ſpreads a veil of glory over what would be, in her abſence, the unſeen canopy of nature, and the bond of ſilence and of ſleep—the contemplative man, I ſay, who is ſtruck with theſe images and theſe reflections, cannot help looking into his heart, and pouring out his ſoul in penitence and hope, in full confidence in the tender mercies, and in patient acquieſcence in the ſteady juſtice, of his Maker.

What impreſſions, on the contrary, can a fulgent ſun and a gaudy day inſpire!

Should the heat be intenſe, every one complains with petulance of the fervor of the noon-tide rays: ſhould thoſe be clouded, the ſame fault is found with obumbration: if the weather continue too long dry, the man of intereſt repines; if

if too long wet, he ſtill is diſcontented; and laſtly, if the ſeaſons ſhould be marked by temperate viciſſitudes, he then inveighs againſt the inſtability of the climate. In ſhort, every individual ſeems to be more or leſs diſſatisfied with day: but where is he who does not look forward with impatience to night?

The man of gallantry and faſhion is impatient for the hour that favours ſeduction, or that offers him an opportunity to ſhine in the ſocieties and public reſort of wealth and conſequence; the moth of the day exchanged for the glow-worm of night, or rather for the *ignis fatuus* that ſends forth a ray to lead to darkneſs and deſtruction.

The patient hind looks forward to the moon-light hour, as the invitation to repoſe, and bleſſes thoſe friendly beams that conduct him on his way, and that enable him, without expence or danger, to regain his cottage.

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The traveller is grateful for the benignity of its beams, nor needs inquiry to direct him to his inn.

The philoſopher is wrapped in the awful contemplation of the ſcenes around, and accounts for the ſilver luſtre that adorns the groves, the rivers, and the lawns, and for the chilly dews that deſcend in pearly miſts to refreſh the earth, and for the genial profuſion of which the inhabitants of Lima and of Egypt are under ſuch tranſcendent and eternal obligations.

But it is the aſtronomer who, above all, is intereſted in the ſublime obſervance of a cloudleſs night, when, forgetting the world as a ſenſualiſt, and loſt in himſelf as a man, he explores the argent luminary, and conſiders it only as a glittering ſpeck of ſand in that luminous ocean of glowing ſuns, by which ſuch myriads of inviſible worlds are ſo ſtupendouſly,

doully, ſo regularly, and ſo ſilently irradiated.

How ſublime is the idea of him who holds an intercourſe with the heavenly bodies, and is even ſufficiently aſpiring to claim in his works, a converſe with his Creator; to inveſtigate the laws which he has impoſed, to define his wiſdom, to aſcertain his ends, and to aſſert with confidence that what he has done cannot be otherwiſe than perfect!

If ſuch an idea be ſublime, how benevolent muſt be that Power who has entruſted his ſecrets to man; who has made him the partaker of his benefits, and the expounder of his will; and who, deſcending from thoſe tranſcendent heights in which his favoured angels dare not look up to the effulgency of his rays, has even condeſcended, from his inordinate goodneſs and mercy, to ſend down a Viſitor, ſhort only of himſelf in perfection, to take upon himſelf the ſame habits of miſery, with the diſgrace

diſgrace of his condition, to teach him a life of juſtice and obedience, that he may taſte comfort upon earth, and thereby ſecure a promiſe of bleſſings hereafter.

But it is the child of ſorrow who ought in an eſpecial manner to bleſs the night that whiſpers to his ſighs, and that weeps to his tears; that ſeems to feel with pity, and to melt at, his afflictions, and which invites him to ſilence, and calms him to repoſe; for the moſt heavy ſufferings muſt loſe their force by time, and the moſt watchful eye be at laſt depreſſed by ſleep.

The innocent man, however wretched in the day, may be compoſed and happy in his ſlumbers, for the remembrance of misfortunes does not always exiſt in dreams: but let the guilty wretch beware how he dare commit his thoughts to night; let him reflect upon thoſe lines which Shakeſpeare has put into the mouth of Richard:

"O gentle

" O gentle Sleep! how have I frighted thee!
" But thou no more wilt weigh my eye-lids down,
" Or ſteep my ſenſes in forgetfulneſs!"

Let him reflect upon theſe lines, and then commune with his heart, and try if it can be at peace.

As I have enumerated the different objects of rural impreſſion, as they aroſe in my mind while I was deſcribing the progreſs of the crop, and have ventured to intrude the reflections they occaſioned; I ſhall now ſuppoſe it to be entirely concluded, and that the young canes and the ratoons are getting their firſt cleaning after its termination; that poiſon is, according to cuſtom, ſtrewed over the different pieces, for the deſtruction of the rats; and that no one thing concerning ſugar-making is left, for the ſeaſon, undone, excepting the remnant of the produce that is not ſufficiently cured to be ſent down to the wharf, but which will, of courſe, be ſhipped before the month of Auguſt. I ſhall therefore proceed to a deſcription

deſcription of the plantain-tree; a production which is in general ſuppoſed to be inferior in value, but is in ſome inſtances ſuperior, to the boaſted riches of the ſugar-cane.

I ſhall be, I hope, excuſed, if I minutely deſcribe the nature of this plant, the ſoil and ſituation in which it is preferably cultivated and found to thrive, the manner in which the land is prepared for its reception, and the method in which it is inhumed; the particularities of its growth; its appearance, as well in its early as in its progreſſive ſtate; the uſe to which its fruit is converted, when it has attained its period of maturity; and how it turns out at laſt to profit, as manure.

All kinds of ground proviſions and corn are, as well as the plantain, ſucceſsfully cultivated in the mountains; but as this is done by the negroes in their own grounds, and on thoſe days which are given to them for this particular purpoſe, it does not enter

into the maſs of plantation-labour: it may be however noticed, that ſome idea may be conveyed of the manner in which they conſume or employ that time which is given to them either for relaxation or profit.

The humanity of individuals in England, is too apt to exaggerate the real labour and ſufferings of the negroes in Jamaica; and I ſhould be ſorry, were I even of ſufficient conſequence, to advance one word that could, in any inſtance, tend to the ſuppreſſion of a ſigh in their particular favour. Their condition alone, independently of any abuſes to which a ſtate of bondage may be ſubject, is ſufficient to awaken the commiſeration of the moſt unfeeling; but yet let not the tongue of Benevolence in too peremptory a manner inſiſt, that ſlavery like theirs is cut off from every enjoyment.

Let Compaſſion turn the eye, with ſympathy of heart, to thoſe thouſands who weep

weep under the pangs and diſgrace of perſonal, and perhaps unmerited, confinement; who lament, in ſolitary excluſion, the loſs of liberty; or who are diſturbed, by noiſe and blaſphemy, from brooding over in quiet ſorrow, thoſe diſappointments they have ſuffered, or thoſe miſeries they endure.

If there be twenty thouſand perſons confined in the different gaols of the kingdom, for debt; and if it be ſuppoſed that the perſonal durance of one has an effect upon either the means or the comforts of *five*—how very great muſt be the annual calculation of miſery! what affliction muſt be felt by families, what deſpondency be the fate of individuals!

Of the numbers that die in the houſes of mortification and of ſhame, from a bare reflection of their condition, the calculation is more conſiderable than the intereſted and the unfeeling will be inclined to ſuppoſe; for if an eſtimate were to be

made of the broken-hearted alone, independently of thoſe who actually periſh for want of the common neceſſaries and ſupports of life, the amount would ſhock the philanthrophiſt, as it ought to awaken the legiſlator, to intereſt the citizen, and to ſhame the man. Happy are thoſe, in ſome inſtances, who are without property, and are conſequently ignorant of law! Such are the *peaſantry* in moſt countries, and ſuch are the *ſlaves* in all.

It is more particularly in England, the land of boaſted freedom, that one man preſumes to have a ſummary right to attach the perſon of another, and to overwhelm with ſhame and ſorrow his benefactor and his friend. It is in the power of a mean and an inſolent creditor, without producing an honeſt teſtimony of his debt, to conſign to mortification and deſpair, the life of him who is willing, and who would be able, were his means not ſequeſtered to gratify the rapacity of others,

others, to diſcharge his demand with punctuality and honour.

The perſon of no one is ſafe, who owes ten pounds, although he may have a hundred in his pocket to pay it, if the wretch to whom he is indebted this paltry ſum, ſhall either diſlike the cut of his face, ſhall have imagined ſome perſonal ſlight, or ſhall wiſh, from an inſolent malignity of heart, to expoſe him to private mortification, and to diſgrace him by public ſhame.

How ſeldom do individuals expreſs any compaſſion for thoſe who owe them money! Humanity is buried in intereſt; and he who would ſquander hundreds of pounds to gratify his oſtentation and his pride, would not give one ſhilling to reſcue a ſuffering wretch from want and miſery: and there are even numbers among thoſe who have ſubſcribed ſo largely towards the liberation of negroes, who would not cancel a debt of fifty pounds, to relieve

a human creature, of their own religion and colour, from the diſgrace of confinement, and the confines of deſpair.

By whom are the patient ſoldiers, and the much-enduring ſeamen, pitied? The former are ſwept away by the ſcythe of death, like cowſlips in a field; and yet no one ſeems to care whether they exiſted, or they died.

How many thouſands of the latter deſcription of men are annually ſacrificed to famine and diſeaſe, without even partaking of individual commiſeration! and what numbers are ſwallowed up by that tremendous and voracious element which, indignant at the preſumption of man, has ſtrewn rocks and quick-ſands in his way, to forewarn him of his raſhneſs, to point out his danger, and, theſe neglected, to convince him of his end!

The late awful ſpectacle exhibited at Yarmouth, muſt ſurely congeal the blood of

of every man of feeling, who ſhall ſuffer himſelf to form an idea of the domeſtic affliction that muſt conſequently enſue; and yet the impreſſion of the ſcene may wear away with the hour that produced it; and he who was not a witneſs of the deſtruction, may not anticipate the miſeries it has occaſioned: nay, although it may be in ſome inſtances a public loſs, yet, after the firſt affected ſigh of ſurpriſe ſhall have evaporated, all future exclamation may become for ever ſuppreſſed.

How ſeldom does humanity take an intereſt in the labour and confinement of the galley-ſlaves, who, chained to the oar, and ſcarcely clothed, and barely fed, are obnoxious to daily toil and nightly ſtench; and that covering which protects them from the beams of day, at the ſame time expels that air which might help to refreſh their languid bodies, and to cheer their drooping minds. So little is their unhappy fortune commiſerated, that the inhuman have been ſometimes known to take pleaſure in their

ſufferings, and have even beheld without compunction their unremitting exertions lead to death.

How enviable is the real ſituation of a good *negro*, to any of thoſe of the above deſcription! Theſe laſt have not any time they can call their own; whereas the *former* has many weeks, nay months, that he can apply according to the bent of his inclinations, and for which he is not accountable to any one.

The manufacturer, the artiſan, and the mechanic, cannot be ſaid to enjoy their leiſure; for theſe muſt work to ward off famine; and if they take but one day in the week, excepting Sunday, to themſelves, it is conſidered as a theft upon their families, and they will conſequently feel diſtreſs; beſides, they are obliged to work every hour in the day, and to carry their labour likewiſe into the night; whereas the occupations of the negro are not ſo unremitting; and, ſeven months in the year at leaſt, before

ſix o'clock in the morning, and after ſeven at night, his perſonal attendance is ſeldom required, and it is of courſe diſpenſed with. He has every Sunday throughout the year to himſelf, every other Saturday out of crop, two or three days at Chriſtmas, many days in the rainy ſeaſons, and afternoons at other times beſides; and he is frequently laid-up for days, by imaginary illneſs; and in which he is perhaps too often indulged.

Having ſeen it aſſerted in the public prints, that the negroes in the Weſt-India Iſlands are not allowed any ſpecific time for relaxation, I have been conſequently induced to ſtate the leiſure they actually enjoy; and I could likewiſe enumerate many other indulgences which they experience, were I not apprehenſive that I might be conſidered partial: but I muſt here take the liberty to enforce, a ſecond time, an obſervation I have before made; and thoſe who intereſt themſelves ſo much in the fate of the ſlaves, will, I

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am ſure, excuſe me when I aſſert that the planter muſt be a real gainer by every reform that can immediately or ultimately tend to the comfort and happineſs of thoſe upon whoſe labour he is dependent for his own felicity and wealth; and he ſhould be the firſt to come forward and enforce every benevolent inſtitution that can either meliorate their ſituations, or ſoften the appellation, or ſuppreſs the rigours of bondage.

It is now time to return to my promiſed ſubject.

The plantain-trees are propagated from ſuckers that grow out of the parent ſtem; and when they are cultivated upon flat land, the holes in which they are ſet are drawn in ſtrait lines, and about ten or twelve feet aſunder. One large plant, or two ſmall ones, are depoſited in each bed; between theſe, are induced one or two rows of cocos; and between theſe again, is planted corn: and the ſame method

thod is obſerved and practiſed, wherever the nature of the land ſhall be ſufficiently level to admit of it.

This valuable production will certainly in general thrive beſt in the mountains, where the frequency of rains, or the conſtancy of the dews, promote its growth, and refreſh its vegetation; and the more new the land, and the more deep the mould may happen to be, the more luxuriantly will it thrive, the more large and abundant will be the produce, and the longer will it continue without the neceſſity of a ſecond plantation.

The corn will be ripe in about five months; the cocos may be deſpoiled of the excreſcent roots, or fingers, in ſeven or eight; and the heads, in ten or twelve: but ſtill the abundance and the perfection of the crop will greatly depend upon the time in which the plant was made, the nature of the land, the care that has been taken of it, and the various ſeaſons by which it has been

been either reſtrained in its growth, or brought forward to maturity. What makes the coco particularly valuable, and the reaſon why it ſhould be cultivated in preference to any other proviſions of the country, is the ſingular property it has of remaining many months uninjured in the ground, after it ſhall have attained its utmoſt perfection.

The yam is likewiſe a very fine vegetable, and of which there are two kinds, both cultivated in the ſame manner, but gathered in at different ſeaſons.

The negro yam is rather bitter, and by no means ſo ſubſtantial as the other ſpecies, which is diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of flower-yam, to denote its ſuperiority.

Theſe ground proviſions will not keep ſo long in the earth, in the firſt plant, as the coco will; but when once they have taken root, they are not eaſily eradicated, and hence furniſh, about Chriſtmas, to

thoſe

thoſe who are induſtrious, a temporary ſupply of wholeſome food; for old yams are certainly preferable, in nutriment and taſte, to the new.

This vegetable is raiſed from cuttings of the root; every one of which is planted upon a little hillock of earth; and ſo ſoon as the ſhoots are ſufficiently ſtrong, they are ſupported by ſticks, upon which they twine and bear a ſeed, which is likewiſe uſed for the reproduction of this wholeſome plant.

The leaves of the cocos are broad and ſucculent, and are excellent food for hogs; whereas thoſe of the yam are ſmall, and not convertible to any uſeful purpoſe.

The former reſemble a bed of docks; the latter, if the ſticks be tall, are not in appearance much unlike a diminutive hop-ground, when full of leaves.

Of

Of the caſſavi, there are two kinds, the bitter and the ſweet. The firſt is poiſonous; but when the juice is expreſſed, it becomes a very wholeſome, but in its raw ſtate a very inſipid, food; but when toaſted, it is more palatable: and ſome people, particularly the French, I am told, prefer it in their colonies to any vegetable whatever: they grind it as fine as powder, mix water with it, and uſe it in this ſtate.

The ſweet caſſavi is cultivated like the bitter, from cuttings of the branches; is not in the leaſt deleterious, but is not held in the ſame eſtimation with the other. The roots only, of both kinds, are the parts that are eaten; and thoſe of the bitter will remain uninjured in the land for many months, if not for years. As theſe productions are not cultivated in large ſpots, they have not a pictureſque appearance.

The

The Eboetoyer is raiſed with moſt ſucceſs in brick-mould land, upon the banks of rivers, and in which ſoil the produce is abundant. It has heads and fingers like the coco; is apt to ſcratch the mouth, if not properly boiled; but is otherwiſe an agreeable root, and in taſte reſembles an artichoke bottom.

The ſweet potatoe is among the minor proviſions of the country; and where the land is looſe and favourable, its returns are very great: and when a large ſpot of ground is covered with the leaves of this vegetable, it makes a verdant and a pleaſing appearance.

The plantain-tree, in point of nutriment and uſe, is, in the line of proviſions, the ſtaple of the country; and is certainly one of the moſt valuable vegetables in the world. From its firſt plantation until the time it fructifies, is about nine or ten months; but its growth and maturity will depend a great deal upon the nature of

of the ſoil, the kindneſs of the ſeaſons, and the care which ſhall have been taken of it in its progreſs to perfection.

I have known the plantain ſhoot forth, and the fruit become full, according to the term adopted by the negroes, and which expreſſes the firſt ſtate in which it is fit for uſe, in leſs than eleven, but I believe that the average time in which it attains it, will be found to be between fourteen and fifteen, months.

If it be not gathered, or cut, when it ſhall have arrived at its perfect growth, it will be ſeen by degrees to loſe its vivid appearance, to turn from green to yellow, and at laſt to become quite ripe; in which ſtate it is a delicious ſweetmeat, and not unlike the banana in taſte, and which tree it reſembles in growth and appearance, the ſtem of the latter being only diſtinguiſhed, independently of its fruit, by ſtreaks and ſpots of black.

The

The common height of this tree will, I think, be found to be from twelve to twenty feet; the leaves ſhoot out from the centre, are very long and broad; they tremble to every breeze, are ſhredded by the leaſt wind, and they fall a victim to the ſlighteſt blaſt. It is perhaps, through all its ſtages, one of the moſt beautiful, as it is next to the ſugar-cane the moſt valuable plant, in the Weſt-Indies.

From the time that it ſhoots forth its firſt leaf, an almoſt viſible increaſe of vegetation can be daily obſerved; and in proportion as the ſtem riſes in height, and ſwells below, the leaves are ſeen to cluſter and to expand above. They are at firſt of a yellowiſh green, and ſink imperceptibly into darker ſhades, until they appear, at a little diſtance, to be almoſt black: but when the fruit begins to ripen, they are ſeen to change their appearance, and to verge every day more and more near towards a ruſſet yellow, until they become at laſt of the colour, and par-

take of the property of ſtraw, and are uſed by the negroes as thatch to cover their houſes.

So ſoon as the fruit ſhall be in that ſtate which is called *full*, the tree, which bears but one bunch at a time, conſiſting of from thirteen to twenty or thirty plantains, is cut down; and being left at the root, it gradually decays; and being repleniſhed with water, it ſupplies with moiſture, and ſerves as manure, the progeny of ſuckers that ſhoot out around, in proportion to the richneſs of the ſoil, its protection from the treſpaſs of cattle, the frequency of ſhowers, and, more than all, the moderation of the winds.

Some roots will throw up, and maintain, from three or four to fifteen, twenty, or even a more conſiderable number of ſucceſſive plants; ſo that, if no accidents of dry weather ſhall happen to burn them up, or hurricanes to break or throw them down, they will remain in continual bearing for a number of years, and will give more

more nutriment to the land than they take from it.

The interior part of the tree is good food for cattle and hogs; and the latter will thrive upon the off-ſets of the roots, which become almoſt as hard as cocos, and may be applied with advantage to the purpoſe I have juſt deſcribed.

The plantain-tree, when it firſt puts forth its fruit, is a very beautiful production: it is enveloped in a thick leaf of a purple colour, which is ſtriped with a varying ſhadow of the ſame tint, and which, in point of feel, is like the ſenſation of the finger upon velvet; and which, as the produce ſwells, is gently diſplaced, and conſequently ſhews the nature of its growth.

In the early ſtate of fructification, the plantains appear to be all compreſſed together in their verdant bed; they afterwards by degrees expand, and ſtand out

diſtinctly ſeparate from one another. They are at firſt of a very light green, and become more and more dark, until they arrive at that perfection which is ſhort of a tendency to ripeneſs; and then, as I before obſerved, if they be not cut down, they will change their colour, and aſſume that of a deep and glowing yellow.

Of the fruit there are different ſizes: thoſe that are produced in the mountains are the largeſt, and are diſtinguiſhed by the negroes under the appellation of horſe plantains: the ſmaller kind is called the maiden plantain; and this grows in cluſters like the banana, and is preferable, in point of taſte, to thoſe of larger dimenſions.

When the outſide huſk is taken off, which when boiled makes excellent food for ſwine, the fruit appears to be of a whitiſh caſt, and is, without any further preparation, either roaſted, boiled, or beat-up into a kind of paſte, which the white people, as well as the negroes, are accuſtomed

cuſtomed to eat with pepper pot, under the vulgar name of tum-tum.

The plantain I ſhould ſuppoſe to be the fineſt vegetable in the world; and from the partiality with which it has been always mentioned by circumnavigators, and even in thoſe regions in which the bread-fruit abounds, it is natural to ſuppoſe that it has the preference of this highly-vaunted and ſingular production.

The bread-fruit tree, if it has been introduced, has not yet reached a ſtate of fructification in Jamaica; and whether or no it will thrive in that latitude, or the eſtimation of it will be preferred to that of the plantain, it will, from the nature of its propagation, require ſome time to determine.

The tardineſs of its growth, when compared to the celerity of the vegetation of the former; the quantity of land over which, from its ſize and the expanſion of

its branches, it muſt neceſſarily extend; the number of years it is known to take before it begins to yield; its not bearing conſtantly all the year around; its ſubjection to the devaſtations of the hurricane, by which it may be either deracinated, or its produce be ſwept off—all theſe circumſtances combined, very ſtrongly incline me to believe that the plaintain-tree, where it thrives, and is protected from the viſitations of the winds, is guarded againſt the treſpaſſes of the cattle, and the wanton deſtruction of man, will be ultimately ſaid to be the moſt valuable plant, and that upon which may be placed the moſt certain dependence.

The plaintain-tree will yield more fruit in the ſame proportion of ground, will ſooner recover its growth and bearing after the deſtructive fury of the elements, and will equally anſwer in a ſtate of ruin, and after it ſhall have acquired perfection, the ſalutary purpoſes of fodder and manure.

The

The manner in which the negroes occupy themſelves in their grounds is rather an employment than a toil, particularly if the wood be felled, and the land be cleared: but if they have heavy timber to cut down, the labour will be much, and the danger will be great; for they often get maimed or killed in this precarious operation, in which are required not only ſtrength and ſkill, but likewiſe foreſight.

They generally make choice of ſuch ſpots of land for their grounds as are encompaſſed by lofty mountains; and I think that they commonly prefer the ſides of hills which are covered with looſe ſtones, to the bottoms upon which they are not ſo abundant. Some will have a mixture of both, and will cultivate the plaintain-tree upon the flat, and their other proviſions upon the riſing ground; and ſome will purſue a contrary method; for in the choice as well as change of ſituation, they ſeem to be directed more by novelty and

caprice, than by convenience or expediency.

Some negroes will plant, and keep clean, a very large proportion of land; ſome will have but little, and will but negligently attend to that; and others will not cultivate any at all, but will entirely depend upon the labours of the induſtrious, and deſtroy in proportion to their indolence.

They prepare their land, and put in their different crops on the Saturdays that are given to them, and they bring home their proviſions at night; and if their grounds be at a conſiderable diſtance from the plantation, as they often are to the amount of five or ſeven miles, or more, the journey backwards and forwards makes this rather a day of labour and fatigue, than of enjoyment and reſt; but if, on the contrary, they be within any tolerable reach, it may be ſaid to partake of both.

On Sunday they carry their riches to market, for ſuch the produce of a good ground to an induſtrious negro may with propriety be called; and if they have only this day in the week, as is commonly the caſe throughout the crop, they muſt go to the mountains early in the morning to ſearch for proviſions, that they may be in time to barter or to vend them at the well-known town, and to which they will repair, although it ſhould be ten, or even a more conſiderable number of miles from the plantation; and it is aſtoniſhing what immenſe weights they will carry upon their heads at this extended diſtance, with what cheerfulneſs they will undertake the length, and with what ſpirit and perſeverance they will overcome the fatigue, of the journey.

It muſt be obvious to every one, of what advantage it is to have the negro grounds as contiguous as poſſible to the eſtate; for although to an able negro the extraordinary diſtance of a few miles may not be

of

of conſequence, yet to the old and infirm, and particularly to the children, it is a circumſtance of preſent, as it may be found to be an object of future importance.

Some portion of ground adjoining to every plantation ſhould be ſet aſide for the weakly, and ſhould be cultivated for the ſuperannuated, negroes; a deſcription of the human ſpecies who, having conſumed the vigour of youth in the ſervice of their maſters, are too often neglected, and left a prey to diſeaſe and want at the cloſe of life, or are expected to depend upon their own feeble exertions, or upon the ſupport of their children and friends, for what they are entitled, not only from humanity but juſtice, to receive from the hand of him whoſe means have been augmented by their induſtry and toil.

The negroes, when working in their grounds, exhibit a picture of which it will be difficult to give a minute deſcription.

They

They ſcatter themſelves over the face, and form themſelves into diſtinct parties at the bottom, of the mountains; and being conſequently much divided, their general exertions can be only obſerved from a diſtance.

If the land be hilly, it is generally broken by rocks, or encumbered with ſtones; the firſt they cannot diſplace, but the laſt they gently remove as they proceed in their work, and thus make a bed for the depoſit of the plantain-ſucker and the coco, or of the corn and yam.

Upon theſe occaſions they move, with all their family, into the place of cultivation; the children of different ages are loaded with baſkets, which are burthened in proportion to their ſtrength and age; and it is pleaſing to obſerve under what conſiderable weights they will bear themſelves up, without either murmur or fatigue. The infants are ſlung at the backs of the mothers,

mothers, and very little incommode them in their walks or labour.

The negro grounds, when highly cultivated and kept in order, are very pleaſing to the eye, and have a double intereſt upon the mind of the obſerving and benevolent planter, who cannot fail to trace to their proper ſource the hand of nature that ſo abundantly ſupports the exertions of induſtry, and converts to profit the hand of toil.

When the plantain is cultivated on the ſide of a hill, or in the boſom of a glen, it is, in ſuch a ſituation, very ſeldom obvious to the ſunny rays; but is, on the contrary, if not invigorated by frequent ſhowers, at leaſt ſuſtained by conſtant dews; and hence it grows and expands in a ſuperior pride of ſtrength and vegetation. The ſtem is thick, the leaves are long, the fruit is large, the bunch is heavy; and as this beautiful production is ſeen in groups in thoſe particular ſpots congenial to its perfection of growth, and which com-

commonly is obſerved to darken with its green umbrellas the deſcent of hills, or the ſilent boſom of a foreſt-bounded glade, it ſeems to invite the labourer, after the fatigues of the day, to ſhadows, contemplation, and repoſe.

Very ſhort indeed is the period of time when a ſun-beam hovers to diſpenſe its warmth, and to invigorate the produce of theſe retreats; and hence the darkneſs of the verdure, and the expanſion of the glooms: for although warmth be neceſſary to every thing of vegetable exiſtence, yet too much heat will dry up the ſources of fecundation, and occaſion the fruit to wither at leaſt, if not to die.

I have generally obſerved that the plantain-tree flouriſhes moſt in cockpits, ſurrounded by rocks or woods; and I cannot help attributing this obſervation to the partial excluſion of the vertic rays: and it ſeems to be worthy of notice that the coco will thrive, not only in theſe ſequeſtered ſituations,

ſituations, but likewiſe under the ſhadowy leaves of the valuable production above deſcribed.

The banana and the plantain-tree are ſeen to grow with much luxuriance around the huts of the watchmen, whether they be ſituated upon the mountains, or obſerved upon the plains; and they certainly contribute much in appearance to the rural ſcenery.

A pictureſque hovel at the foot of a mountain, in the neighbourhood of a rock, and at the bottom of which ſhall be ſeen to yawn perhaps a romantic cavern; a ſmall ſpot of ground beſide the road, encloſed by penguins, and here and there a broken paliſado, as if to invite a ray of light to dart acroſs the crevices; a narrow and a winding path that leads the enquiring ſtranger to the open wicket of the thatch-adorned manſion; a group of full and expanſive banana and plantain trees, that wave over the ridge, and ſhew their green

or

or yellow fruit, at every aſpiration of the breeze; and laſt of all, the ſhredded leaves that look like ribbons fluttering in the air, that ruffle or whiſper to the paſſing wind; are objects of rural impreſſion in every part of this romantic iſland.

When theſe pictureſque trees are cultivate in large fields upon the plains, are planted with regularity and care, have been well attended and cleaned; when the ſeaſons have been favourable, and they have conſequently attained that height from which the appearance of the fruit may be ſoon expected, it is hardly poſſible to conceive a proſpect more ſolemn, gloomy, and impreſſive, than is exhibited in the verdant aiſles which the ſpreading glooms occaſion, and which at a little diſtance appear to be a foreſt of ſhade, over which is beginning to deſcend the curtain of night.

When a walk like this of fifteen or twenty acres is explored at the dawn of day,

day, or at the cloſe of the evening beams, which are obſerved to pierce the entrance of the glooms, it cannot fail to ſtrike the contemplative man with reflection and with awe. Whenever he turns himſelf round, he obſerves the embowering canopy ſtretching forth its dark receſſes; he ſeems to wander through the walks of nature improved by art; nor does he farther regard the bluſhing ſun, now ſetting at a diſtance, and gilding the avenue in which he ruminates, than as an object that appears to take with regret a laſt farewell of ſilence and of ſhade.

The wild plantain is a pleaſing ornament of the mountain roads; and it reſembles in colour and in growth the other ſpecies, with this difference only, that it is always barren.

Sometimes as the traveller winds his way between lofty and umbrageous hills, he beholds on one ſide of the narrow path a deep declivity which runs ſhelving down

down to a bottom rudely ſown with buſhes and with ſtones; and as the latter create and continue moiſture, the vegetables in ſuch ſituations are obſerved to grow and ſpread with peculiar verdure and luxuriancy.

In ſuch ſpots the plants above deſcribed are ſeen in a peculiar manner to flouriſh, and to pleaſe; and as they thrive moſt in groups, and by their approximation and the ſingular expanſion of their leaves not only collect and imbibe, but treaſure up the ſhowers that fall, or the dews that at night deſcend, they ſeem, although ſelf-planted, to bid defiance to tempeſts and to age, and to promiſe themſelves an eternal ſucceſſion of plants from the ſame parental root.

This pictureſque production is often ſeen to grow by the ſide of a road, at the foot of a large and craggy rock, and adjoining perhaps to a mountain torrent, which, ſwelled by the rains and auxiliary rills, works on its founding courſe, and either overflows, undermines, or deracinates the

different plants that lately grew upon its banks (when it only murmured as a ſilver rill, and waſhed the poliſhed ſtones and golden ſands with its refreſhing waters), and hurries them on, until they are eternally loſt in the imbibing ſea.

In roads like theſe it is by no means uncommon to ſee immenſe trees, that have been diſlodged by the tempeſt, not only block up the path, but bridge the torrent; and from which it is hardly poſſible to look down without giddineſs and dread upon the depths below.

In ſituations ſuch as theſe many awful and ſublime ſtudies might be made by an artiſt of a bold and romantic turn of mind, reſembling that of Reubens, of Salvator Roſa.

A narrow road, through which with difficulty a cart can paſs, and this worn out by the traverſes of wheels, and the perſevering induſtry of man, at the bottom of

of an immenſe and overhanging mountain, fringed with ſhrubs, and moſt magnificently ſkirted with trees, which raiſe their gigantic ſtems from the romantic fiſſures of the diſrupted rock, and ſeem to ſpurn the angry torrent underneath, and to bid defiance to the blaſt; that receive the deluge upon their ſummits, the lightning upon their branches, nor heed the repercuſſive thunder-peals that growl around; are images that are often obſerved in theſe retreats.

When the ſtorm ſubſides, and nature makes a pauſe, the pearly ſhowers are ſhaken from their leaves, the ſun-beam gives its warmth; and they now erect their heads again, the quiet and imperial monarchs of the foreſt round.

On one ſide of the road is a bold declivity, or a tremendous precipice, which looks down to the abyſs of ſilence and of night; and beyond which is a region of rocks, which form themſelves into ca-

verns, caſtles, promontories, cliffs, and towers, with here and there a knot of trees that ſeem to ſtruggle for a paſſage through the ſtony crevices, or rampant ſhrubs that wind acroſs the tinted ſurface, and ſhow like ivy that feſtoons the arches of the time-worn aqueduct, or the more ſolemn ornaments of cathedral ſhades. The ſun juſt peeps upon the awful maſſes, and with a ſpreading light irradiates the glooms; and then, as if retiring to obſerve the effect, and to hang with pleaſure upon the magnificent ſcenery below, he climbs the fartheſt heaven, and ſeems for a time ſtationary in his vertic height, and ſpreads his cheerful influence over the mountains and the plains.

Over ſome of theſe gigantic fragments, and ſtill obvious to the aſtoniſhed eye, there tumbles down a full caſcade, the thunders of which aſtound the ear, and ſeem to ſhake the landſcape round. The weight of waters forms a gulph below, and retreating downwards, or aſcending into

into ſpray, appears to be in continual tumult, wrath, and motion.

Over many parts of the torrent that is occaſioned by this accumulated influx of waters, are obſerved immenſe and fallen trees, over which the ſafe-footed goats are ſeen to frolic without fear, nor dread the giddy chaſm that yawns beneath. Sometimes they browze in the vallies, or bound from rock to rock, and hang in giddy pendence upon the edge of a precipice, as if they took delight in looking down upon the awful glooms below.

At a narrow part of the road is ſeen a loaded wain that has been cruſhed to pieces by the maſſy fragment of a deſcending rock; the ſable drivers ſtand in mute aſtoniſhment at the dreadful accident, and hardly ſeem to know if they themſelves have yet eſcaped the danger. A few ſtraggling negroes, that by chance are paſſing by, are likewiſe arreſted at

the obſervation of the miſchief; nor do they for a time offer their unavailing ſervice. As night draws on, their impatience, as their exertions, is increaſed; and the ſplendours of the day are now withdrawn, that the moon with chaſte and ſolemn light may pierce the glooms, and add, with dews and ſilence in her train, to the impreſſive horrors of the midnight hour.

The inoffenſive and ſuffering cattle are with difficulty let looſe to browze, while their melancholy conductors illume a fire, and ſit in mournful watchfulneſs bewailing their apprehended fate, nor cheat the lagging night with one aſſuaſive ſlumber.

Into ſuch a landſcape the lover of the grand and terrible may introduce a party of banditti, who diſturb the melancholy ſilence of the ſcene, and, bent upon plunder and inured to blood, drive away the oxen, and put their unreſiſting attendants to death.

To ſcenes of horror the retired mountains in Jamaica are particularly adapted; as are, on the contrary, the lowlands and the plains, eſpecially productive of pleaſing tranquillity and rural delight.

The farms, or pens as they are denominated, are replete with paſtoral imagery; and the appearance of immenſe droves of horned cattle, that expatiate at large over the unbounded paſture, or that are ſeen to browze in the different incloſures, which are ſurrounded by the prickly penguin, or the logwood fences, afford a pleaſing ſpectacle to him who has not been uſed to behold the carpet of nature thus giving the means of labour to the induſtrious, and wholeſome proviſion to the wealthy.

Upon one range of land is obſerved an immenſe quantity of horſes, and of mules, from the foal at the ſide of its dam, to the colt that is impatient of the bit; or the mule that is ſoon to feel the trammels of the mill, or the pinchings of the crook,

but which now are ſeen to frolic and to bound over the reſounding ſod, to daſh through the ſtagnant pond, to ſcour acroſs the duſty road, and at laſt to bury themſelves amidſt the cooling ſhadows of the foreſt.

Over another region are ſeen to wander the heat-enduring ſheep; and gathered together into a ſocial flock, they nibble thus collectively the level lawn, which hardly ſeems to afford them a ſcanty bite, but upon which they produce their fertile burthens twice a year, and load the wholeſome banquet with their fleſh, which is of a very particular and delicate taſte. Of their hair indeed no uſe is made; for even Engliſh ſheep degenerate, and loſe their wool in a ſhort period of time in that intemperate climate; and yet it is remarked that the Creole flocks will not thrive upon the mountains, where the dews are frequent, and the air is chill, in any compariſon of advantage with thoſe that are bred and foſtered upon the plains.

Of

Of their coats a kind of camblet might certainly be made; but, as the ſubordinate ideas of comfort and of uſe are ſacrificed in Jamaica to the manufactory of ſugar and of rum, it will take ſome time before any reformation can be made in the operations, or the cuſtoms, of the country.

The pen-keepers in Jamaica are generally found to be, if not the moſt opulent, at leaſt the moſt independent, of thoſe who cultivate the ſoil. Their capitals indeed are not ſo large as thoſe poſſeſſed of ſugar-plantations; but then their riſks are few, and their loſſes, except in buildings and proviſion-grounds, in conſequence of ſtorms, are very trifling.

The proprietor who lives upon his pen has almoſt all the material neceſſaries, and many of the ſubordinate comforts of life immediately within his reach; and I do not believe that there are many people in any country, of the ſame rank and capital, that either do, or can afford to enter-

entertain with more abundance and hoſpitality.

Their herds will ſupply them with beef and veal; both of which, if the paſture be good, and they are allowed a ſufficient time to fatten, would not be at all inferior, if the meat in that climate could have the advantage of keeping, to the ſame proviſions in England. And I cannot help remarking in this place, that I have ſeen as fine cattle in Jamaica as I have ever beheld in any country; and it ſeems likewiſe extraordinary, that the breeding and the young ſtock are in general in very high condition, although they are raiſed upon paſtures the feeding of which is ſo very ſhort that a ſtranger would hardly think they could afford the leaſt bite whatever: but then the ſod is exceedingly thick, the graſs of a nutritive quality, and the vegetation rapid.

Upon ſome pens there are from two to three thouſand horned and other cattle; and

and of the former ſpecies there are many of conſiderable ſize, inſomuch that it is not uncommon to ſee an ox at the ſlaughter-houſe that ſhall exceed twelve hundred weight. The price of working ſteers is from twelve to twenty pounds currency, but ſometimes more, and ſometimes leſs; and that of mules, from twenty-five to thirty-five per head currency: and when a pen can make ſuch large returns, it is more economically productive than a ſugar-eſtate.

The pen-keeper kills his own mutton and pork, both of which are decidedly ſuperior to the fleſh of ſheep and hogs in England. The flavour of the firſt is mild, and pleaſant; and that of the laſt is equally good throughout the year.

He raiſes his own poultry of every kind: he has fiſh, land-turtle, and crabs, in abundance; and every ſpecies of wild-fowl, at particular ſeaſons of the year, in profuſion. He has wild-boars and pigeons from the mountains; and fruit, without the neceſ-

ſity of purchaſe, or the pains of cultivation. Sugar indeed he muſt buy, as likewiſe rum, if he have not, as many have, a plantation; and as for other liquors, and the more refined luxuries of life, with them his means, his ſavings and economy, may eaſily ſupply him. A man of this deſcription is the one in Jamaica who is the moſt independent, and conſequently the moſt happy.

The pens on the mountains, and thoſe upon leſs lofty elevations, very widely differ, in proſpect and appearance, from thoſe in the plains. Upon the former, the graſs is oftentimes long and naſh; and they are often ſubject to a dreadful inconvenience, the want of water; and when the drought ſhall be exceſſive, and the cattle are conſequently obliged to be driven to ſome river at a conſiderable diſtance, the mortality is oftentimes exceſſive; but as it is but ſeldom that, in ſuch ſituations, the ſeaſons are for a long time withheld, a misfortune of this kind can only be conſidered

ſidered as an uncommon calamity, and as one that is not to be compared to the hurricane that devaſts and ſweeps away the productions of a ſugar-plantation.

Upon mountain-land the Guinea-graſs is cultivated in preference to that which is flat: it is generally planted in the ſpring, and at the diſtance of ſix or eight feet; it grows conſiderably through the rainy ſeaſon, and in October and November it bloſſoms. The cattle are then turned into it, to eat it down: they ſhake out the ſeed; the ſtalks become dry, and are then cut: the ſtubble is conſumed by fire, from the vegetative properties of which the young graſs ſprings up, and in a ſhort time becomes one entire carpet, the verdure of which has a very brilliant, and a pleaſing appearance.

A piece of Guinea-graſs in the month of November, when obſerved either upon the mountains, more gentle elevations, or even upon flat land, affords a variety of intereſting

intereſting ſcenes, and which are varied according to ſituation, time, and growth.

In a young ſtate, when it begins to cover the ground, the colour of the graſs is particularly brilliant; and when the drops of dew hang trembling upon their penſile leaves, or the ſilken threads of the cob-webs are ſpread over the verdant ſurface; or when, broken by the bruſhing tread of ſome ſtraggling heifer that has found its way into the incloſure, they float, like goſſamer, through the air, the lover of nature cannot help obſerving with delight theſe incidental changes which chance ſo frequently occaſions.

This production, I think, appears to moſt advantage when it is in the ſtate I have juſt deſcribed, and intereſts more, as adding beauty to a picture, when it is ſeen cultivated upon gently-ſwelling hills, which inſenſibly loſe their depreſſions upon the plains.

When

When a piece of this deſcription is dotted over by ſtraggling trees, or clumped in particular ſituations by the baſtard cedars, which are ſingular ornaments of the Jamaica farms, or is darkened by the ſhadows which are ſpread by the deep and ſpiced leaves of the pimento, it is hardly poſſible to conceive any natural ſcenery more rich and beautiful; and if there be cattle or ſheep obſerved, or cropping the herbage, or recumbent in the glooms, theſe living objects of rural profit and delight cannot help giving a double intereſt to the ſurrounding ſcenery.

Upon ſome pens there is but little water for the uſe of the cattle, excepting ſuch as is confined in ponds, and the reſources of which are often precarious; but yet I have heard it remarked, and I rather think with ſeeming juſtice, that they fatten more kindly where they drink of what is ſtagnant and muddy, than of that which is flowing and pellucid.

Of thoſe that are abundant in water, I ſhall ſelect, out of a number that are bleſſed with this advantage, the local beauties of a particular one; and I ſhould hope that the deſcription will not be unpleaſing to thoſe who may not have had opportunities of exploring Nature in her moſt ſplendid ſcenes, and in her awful and ſequeſtered glooms.

I ſuppoſe myſelf to be ſtanding upon a given eminence, and caſting my enraptured ſight upon the views around.

On one ſide I look down from a verdant height upon a level and a beauteous lawn, in which a bubbling ſpring, as clear and poliſhed as the watery brilliant, breaks out in fretful murmurs from a gravelly hill, and winds a ſlow irriguous channel to the neighbouring river, which ſurrounds this lovely plain; and with a broad, expanſive ſweep, incloſes it in three parts round, and then flows on, triumphant in its courſe, and

and with a full and meandering bed of waters divides oppoſing hills, and viſits iſlands, rocks, and arches, in its courſe.

It is pleaſant to hear the waters, when with impetuous ruſh they roar upon the ſtony baſements, which, when the floods have ſubſided, appear to form a bridge, over which the patient herds and the timid flocks may ſafely paſs in queſt of a forbidden paſture; and no leſs entertaining to obſerve where the projection of land appears to have ſcooped out a tranquil bay, in which the current of the river is reſtrained, and in which are ſeen innumerable ſhoals of fiſhes of various ſpecies and dimenſions, which dart along the ſtream, or hang in quiet indolence upon the tranſparent ſurface.

It now forſakes the deepened holes, and ſoftly gurgling over ſtones and pebbles, appears to leave a pavement underneath, over which a traveller, when the floods have

ſubſided, may paſs with ſafety: on one ſide of which an immenſe cotton-tree throws out its overſhadowing branches, as if in friendly ſalutation of the enormous fig-tree that riſes indignant over the running ſtream, and guards the oppoſite paſſage of the waters, and diſdains to join its ſhade with that of its gigantic rival. A ſteep and narrow path, adorned with plantain-trees on either ſide, conducts to the fording-place of the river; and the ſilver lapſe ſeems to glide gently away, and to invite, with pleaſing murmur, the weary traveller and the fainting ſteed to taſte the cooling beverage as it flows along, and ſmooths a paſſage for their ſafe conduct and convenience.

Here is ſeen, where a verdant iſland divides the current, a ſolitary angler endeavouring to entrap the mullet; and there, underneath the ſpreading arches of the mahoe, or fiddle-wood, the fiſhermen are caſting the net, or drawing the ſeine, and

and where the harpooner at night arreſts the incautious prey.

As the eye wanders farther on, and is ſatiated with the different charms of the more contiguous proſpect, it beholds the ſilver current ſhine between the branches of the trees, over which the fantaſtic rock has thrown an imaginary bridge; and behind which, as if to cover it with grandeur and protect it from the winds, an immenſe mountain is ſeen to riſe, and dart its ſummit into the vapoury clouds; and upon the ſide of which, and ſeated, as it were, upon a ſaddle of one of the minor elevations, a ſolitary manſion, with a ſurrounding plantation of bearing trees and uſeful ſhrubs, diſtinguiſhes the abode of ſilence and tranquillity.

The view of the river is now intercepted by hanging hills, embrowned by ſhade, and through which the verdant blades of the Guinea-graſs appear every now and then to catch the ſun; and there the tranſparent

waters would prattle over the pebbly bottoms, or with a melancholy murmur waſh the ſands; would hang ſuſpended in the darkened pool, or ruſh in torrents to the arching rocks, unnoticed and unſeen, did not curioſity with a haſty tread forſake the eminence to reach the plain, and ſcrambling through the briars and the weeds, again behold its limpid courſe, and hang with delight upon the different bends which the conſtraining banks occaſion.

Here is obſerved, through the opening foliage of two gigantic trees, a rock of a conſiderable breadth and height, and particularly romantic from the broad expanſion of its ſhades. Some parts of this tremendous maſs are rough and craggy, and ſome have ſurfaces as ſmooth as if the hand of art had chiſeled down their white aſperities.

Some portions of this ſeeming quarry are ſtained with the moſt ſoft and varied tints,

tints, and ſome appear as white and poliſhed as the Parian marble, through which the azure veins are ſeen meandering, until they become ſo much attenuated as to eſcape at laſt the enraptured ſight.

The light is ſeen upon ſome parts to occaſion tremulous and quick reflections; and now the ſhadows ſeem to melt into the crevices, out of which a variety of creeping ſhrubs untwine their netted filaments, decayed by time; or, nouriſhed in a more genial bed of vegetation, expand their little fibres far and wide, and, like the polypus, put forth their pliant fingers to attach themſelves to every little excreſcence that happens to project around.

The tufted weeds hang pendent from the ſummit; the foreſt-trees branch over head; and the ſtill pellucid ſtream receives and returns the different images above deſcribed, and ſeems to engulph the ſurrounding ſcenery in its unfathomable depths below.

Theſe views were on the ſide and at the back of the eminence upon which the houſe was ſeated. To the right, the proſpect was of a different caſt. A projecting hill confined the ſight, which likewiſe caught a reach of the ſame romantic river, over which, as an image of pictureſque variety, a wooden gutter conveyed a ſtream of water from the mountains to the diſtant mill, which, with the works, the plantation-buildings, the negro-houſes, and an immenſe plain, upon which were planted twelve hundred acres of canes, and theſe bounded by an apparent town below, and covered and ſurrounded by lofty mountains above, ſhut in the varieties of art and nature in the front.

Theſe views, as beautiful as the eye can ſee, or the imagination form, were the frequent conſolers of my ſick and melancholy hours, and ſtill convey impreſſions which once had charms to pleaſe, but which it would be now a comfort to forget; for this property belonged to a relation

relation and a friend: but, alas! the hand of death has broken the connexion, and I can only lament the untimely diſſolution!

There is ſtill a kind of pleaſing melancholy in brooding over the remembrance of former confidence, in tracing to the ſource the ſtream of friendſhip, and in finding it unpolluted by the faithleſs current of worldly intereſt, or domeſtic jars.

Many have been the hours that I have hung with complacency and pleaſure upon theſe ſcenes! have obſerved the fogs ariſe from the river, and aſpire like ſmoak between the branches of the trees, while the mind endeavoured to diſpel the melancholy thought, by reflecting with rapture upon the awful images around.

How delightful is it, when the ſoul appears to be detached from the body, and the cogitative powers are awake, to contemplate the ſublime and the obvious wonders of creation in her more ſplendid

as well as humble ornaments; and theſe have a particular, as a ſolemn impreſſion upon the mind at night.

If our thoughts dare not reach to the inveſtigation of the heavenly bodies, and follow the tranſcendent genius of the immortal Newton among the planets and the ſtars; yet has Nature given to the moſt humble abilities, a power to trace, and to behold, with pleaſure and with gratitude, her rural charms.

The comforts of melancholy are never ſo delightfully enhanced as when the eye obſerves with ſilent rapture the trembling moon-beams dance upon the waters, or when the ear is mournfully amuſed by the ſoft and plaintive murmurs of the paſſing ſtream, which, as its lapſe is haſtened or impeded, affects the auditory nerve with different impreſſions.

The current is at one time ſo peculiarly gentle, that it is with difficulty heard to whiſper

whiſper upon the ſands; but ſhould a heavy rain in the mountains, and the rapid torrents, conjoin their influence to awaken its courſe, the turbid increaſe is heard at a diſtance, and pouring on its accumulated ruſh of waters, to gain upon the ear, and to deafen at laſt with its indignant roar: and theſe variations of river appearance I have often had the romantic pleaſure to hear and to obſerve.

There is ſomething highly pleaſing in beholding, from any given ſituation, the plantation-buildings by night, when the moon ſhines ſplendid in her elevation, and there is not any thing to obſcure the brightneſs of her rays, except every now and then a flitting cloud, whoſe ſilver edges, oppoſed to the ſhadowy vapour behind, give a double intereſt to the enthuſiaſm of the obſerver, and an additional charm to the objects around.

The eye cannot help tracing the moving picture about the works. The wains and

mules depoſiting their burthens at the mill; the dun appearance of the negroes that carry in the canes, or paſs backwards and forwards with the traſh, and the lights of whoſe pipes appear like jack-a-lanterns obſcured by miſt; the fires that alternately brighten or ſubſide in the ſtoke-hole ſhed; and the columns of flame and ſmoke that occaſionally aſpire through the chimnies, and which are at a diſtance reflected in the river, or illume the ſtream that runs hurrying from the mill; are objects that cannot fail to intereſt, as well as pleaſe.

The water-wheel is diſtinctly heard to continue its drowzy rotation; the feeders of the mill attune their voices; the boilers call aloud for fuel; and too often, to awaken ſentiment and diſgrace theſe ſounds, the driver's whip is heard to thunder near the buildings, and the ſhrieks of pain to pierce the ear, and drive compaſſion to the heart.

The

The ſettlements in Jamaica, inferior to the ſugar-plantation and the pen, are ſo numerous, that it will be difficult to give them any other than a general deſcription.

The proviſion-grounds in the mountains, or polinks as they are called in the Iſland, admit not of much pictureſque variety. Upon theſe are cultivated, and particularly upon thoſe in Liguanea (a fertile tract of ground in the neighbourhood of Kingſton), all kinds of fruit and garden-ſtuff, or coffee, coco, ginger, and other minor productions of the country.

Some of theſe little ſettlements, being ſituated upon the ſides or brows of the moſt lofty hills, look down upon proſpects of immenſe extent and value: ſome, indeed, can command almoſt entirely the circuit of a pariſh; and others will take in, perhaps, a portion of a county: and of theſe bird's-eye views I ſhall have a better opportunity to ſpeak hereafter.

The

The highland parts of Jamaica are particularly abundant in all kinds of timber, of which the ſoft as well as the harder ſpecies can be often applied to uſe and profit; but the grain of the laſt is hardly to be exceeded in cloſeneſs and durability by the woods of any region upon earth.

It is needleſs to deſcribe the general or the individual property of any of the different ſorts: it is ſufficient in this place to obſerve, that they fully anſwer the wants of the country, without, I believe, but one exception; and it is certainly much to be lamented that no timber has been yet diſcovered of a proper texture, and a ſufficient abundance, to anſwer the purpoſe of the white-oak ſtave, of which the rum-puncheons are always conſtructed. Some partial experiments have been made of other woods; but prejudice has ſo much operated againſt their uſe, or experience condemned their manufacture, that this ſpecies of ſpeculation is now, I believe, almoſt, if not entirely abandoned.

The

The American war, and the conſequent privation of a liberal ſupply of proviſions and ſtores from that country, have pointed out many reſources in both the mountains and the plains of Jamaica; but which the ſubſequent peace has made of little avail, as the labour in getting planks, boards, or building-timber, would be ultimately attended with more real expence, as well as trouble, than the purchaſe, however precarious, of theſe different articles would be at the barguadier. The ſtaves and the heading for the hogſheads ſhould however be excepted, as they ought to be annually ſplit upon the plantation: upon which likewiſe the cog-wood for the mills, the plank for the coolers, and the timber for the low-wine butts, ſhould be likewiſe procured.

The ſubordinate trees and ſhrubs peculiar to the climate, more properly belong to the province of the botaniſt, than to the deſcription of either the general or partial landſcapes of nature; although many of them,

them, particularly the fruit-trees, ſuch as the coco-nut, the palm, the orange, the roſe-apple, the papa, the plantain, and the banana trees; or thoſe of leſs uſeful ſpecies, the bamboo, the anotto, the bean tree, and other productions of this deſcription and growth; and laſt of all, the ſhrubs of various ſize, appearance, and beauty (and among this tribe, the coffee has the decided pre-eminence); and to cloſe the liſt, thoſe plants that creep upon eſpaliers, and form themſelves into bowers and ſhady walks, ſuch as the chota, the grenadilla, and the jeſſamine, have, one or all, ſome diſtinct or general intereſt in the rural ſcenery.

Before I entirely relinquiſh the ſubject of a ſugar-plantation, I muſt obſerve that ſince the introduction and general uſe of the plough, the landſcapes of the country have received a new turn; and while the negroes are at work in planting canes upon one given portion of land, the former

is employed in digging furrows, or cane-holes, upon another.

No object adds more real intereſt to the charms of landſcape, than the rural appearance of this machine; that while it gives variety to Nature, yet Nature in its uſe does not ſeem to be in the trammels of Art; ſo intimately do they aſſociate, and ſo happily do they accord!

Of the uſe of the plough, much may be ſaid of the profit, and much denied: it ſaves labour in ſome reſpects, and in others it augments it. Where it is not perſevered in, the negroes muſt be neceſſarily obliged to ſtock-up, or clear the ſurface of the ſoil, that the fatigue of digging cane-holes may be in ſome meaſure diminiſhed; and if the ſods be tough, and the weeds heavy, it is an operation that is attended with delay and trouble.

If the plough be uſed ſo ſoon as a given portion of land ſhall have been manured, there

there cannot be any obſtruction to its work from the graſs or weeds; for the cattle in the pens will keep down both, and prevent their future vegetation.

So ſoon as the land ſhall be ſufficiently invigorated, the ſurface ought to be immediately turned in; upon the hills by hoe-ploughing, and by the plough upon the plains. It is of conſequence likewiſe that the pieces be planted as ſoon as poſſible after they are holed, that the canes may have all the advantage of manure before the ſalts ſhall be exhaled by the ardours of the ſun, and that the plants may be inhumed before the weeds ſhall have got a-head, which they will otherwiſe ſoon do, in conſequence of a forced and a rapid vegetation.

That the land will not require ſo much cleaning after it ſhall have been turned up by the plough, as it was uſed to do in the ordinary mode of cultivation, cannot, I think, admit of a ſhadow of doubt: it is a ſaving, in

in ſome inſtances, of prodigious labour to the negroes, and in a great meaſure eradicates, or keeps down, that ſpontaneous growth of weeds which have an almoſt immediate vegetation after the rains in Jamaica: it helps to enrich, by the additional number of cattle that it requires, a barren, and it helps to looſen a ſtiff ſoil: it renders the juice of the cane more ſucculent and rich; and gives the produce a better grain and colour than it is thought to poſſeſs in the ordinary modes of cultivation. Whether or no the quantity be enhanced, ſince it has been ſo generally introduced, I will not venture to determine; but that it might be made to anſwer better than it at preſent does, cannot, I think, be eaſily denied.

There is but little land in the Iſland, that is cultivated with the ſugar-cane, particularly upon thoſe eſtates that have been long ſettled, that does not require manure; and the common methods that are adopted, as I before obſerved, to render

it fertile, are found to conſiſt in moving pens, or dropping dung.

Upon hilly eſtates, the manure is carried by mules to the ſides and bottoms of the hills; and it is ſingular to obſerve, however ſeemingly tedious may be the proceſs, with what expedition a given number of acres will be diſpatched.

Upon gentle elevations, and upon flat land, the practice of penning over the cattle is univerſally, and upon all ſoils, and in all ſeaſons, without any variation, adopted.

There is not a country in the world in which there is more room for agricultural improvement, than in the one which I am endeavouring to deſcribe; but then the natural indolence of the inhabitants muſt be removed, their induſtry awakened; and a ſlow and progreſſive trial of experiments muſt be made, under the eye of patience and obſervation, before they can ſucceed.

The

The land in Jamaica rather wants culture than richneſs; nor is the idea, and conſequently the practice of keeping it in heart, at all underſtood. Cultivation is not known as a ſcience, but as a routine of duty: and hence the doctrine of manure, and the uſe of the plough, are only conſidered as operations of annual recurrence, and not as objects that may either injure or improve; for, if the land upon which the *canes* are planted be too much invigorated, *they* will be too luxuriant to yield returns; whereas if poor land, on the contrary, be well cultivated, the produce will not only be good, but may be great.

The leſs the land is turned-up in Jamaica, and expoſed to the burning powers of the ſun, the longer will it preſerve its humidity, and conſequently retain its ſtrength. In the moſt *humble* productions of the country, it is obſervable that *they* thrive beſt in thoſe ſoils which are the moſt abundant in flint ſtones; and if

they be heaped around a coffee-buſh, or what may be called a domeſtic ſhrub, they will certainly maintain, if not increaſe the vegetation.

How far this idea may be held good in Engliſh farming, I will not take upon me to determine, as the means of fertility generally lie beneath the ſurface; whereas in the Iſland above mentioned, neither clay, marl, nor compoſt, are uſed in the ordinary modes of cultivation, although it might be reaſonably ſuppoſed that an artificial ſoil would be more ſteadily productive than the natural one which makes the produce run up into ineffectual luxuriance.

A ſtratum that is made by patient and diſcerning induſtry, will keep the ſtaple much longer in heart than the invariable practice of folding-over the land can do (where manure is neceſſary), without any diſcrimination of mould, of ſituation, or of climate.

The

The ſcience of farming, I am led, from partial experience, to believe, is very little underſtood in the colonies; for where the extreme poverty of the ſoil, in one inſtance, requires experimental culture to make it produce; ſo does the richneſs of ſpontaneous vegetation, on the other, by giving before it is required, relax the more ſtubborn, and make abortive the hand of toil.

Theſe obſervations may not be thought applicable to the preſent ſubject; but as the land in the Weſt-Indies is cultivated by *negroes*, whatever can ſuſtain the crops, without an expoſure of the boſom of the earth, will conſequently contribute to a diminution of *their* labour, and may poſſibly hereafter add, if properly attended to, one ſcruple to the ſcale of that humanity which is at preſent balanced, but which, it is to be hoped, will very ſoon ſink, and continue loaded in *their* favour.

The plough is now partially, and I ſhould hope profitably, uſed upon all plantations in the Iſland, where the nature of the land will admit of its introduction: upon ſome it works in a more general manner than upon others; and if it be found prudent to adopt it, it muſt be of courſe imprudent to relinquiſh it. I have ſeen it go upon ſome of the higheſt, I will not ſay the ſteepeſt, hills in Weſtmoreland; and it is often uſed upon ſituations of the ſame deſcription in other parts of the country; but it muſt ſtill be conſidered, that although it may be a ſaving of labour in ſome reſpects, and is certainly a relief to the negroes in the more heavy operations of the field,—yet does it increaſe their exertions in other inſtances.

In proportion to the extent of its uſe, muſt be the quantity of cattle kept to work it; and in proportion to the quantity of cattle will be the number of acres of land manured, and planted: and this land

land the negroes muſt put in; nor would the introduction of any machine, were it poſſible to contrive one, that would better anſwer the purpoſe, be either a ſaving (as this operation is not attended with much fatigue) of labour, of time, or expence. The proportion of canes being thus increaſed, and the abſolute neceſſity there is that the negroes muſt cut them, an augmentation of labour will therefore, in this inſtance, attend the uſe of the plough: and this (next to the digging of cane-holes, as the cutters muſt continually ſtoop or riſe), is tedious, unremitting, and ſevere; nor can any mechanic power give relief to, or aſſiſt, this manual operation.

The canes, when cut, muſt be tied up; the mules and the wains muſt be loaded and unloaded; they muſt be carried to the mill; they muſt be conveyed into the mill-houſe; they muſt be expreſſed; they muſt be boiled, and their liquor paſs through a regular proceſs in the curing-

houſe and the ſtill-houſe; the traſh muſt be afterwards ſpread to dry; it muſt be houſed; and all theſe different operations muſt be performed by negro labour.

If no more canes ſhall be planted, in conſequence of the introduction of the plough, than were formerly uſed to be put in by the ordinary modes of cultivation, it will then certainly be acknowledged to have given great eaſe to the exertions of the ſlaves: but even then, I much doubt whether or no it will be the abſolute means of an increaſe of population. This reform, ſo congenial with humanity as well as intereſt, muſt eventually, let what will be ſaid upon the ſubject, or whatever ſpeculations it may admit of, depend upon the tenderneſs and indulgence of the white people, under whoſe government they may chance to fall.

That the plough ſucceeds better upon ſome land than it does upon others, it will

would be in vain to ſubſtantiate, as no poſition can be more juſt; but whether its uſe be equally profitable upon all ſoils, will likewiſe admit of a doubt.

The land in Jamaica may be thought to be upon ſome pieces too looſe, and upon others too ſtiff and adheſive: the plough may therefore ſucceed better upon the laſt, than it may be found to do upon the firſt.

Where the land is light and even, it may be holed without having been previouſly ploughed; but where of a contrary nature, the clods ſhould be left to pulverize, or the ſoil be turned up a ſecond time; and if it were even left ſome time in fallow, it might ſtill turn out to more advantage.

Whether the canes yield more *per* acre upon land that has been ploughed, or upon that which has been cultivated according to the old practice, and only holed, I believe that it will be very difficult to determine;

determine; as it will likewiſe be, to aſcertain which method of manuring anſwers beſt—that of flying pens, or dropping dung into the holes:

Upon the hills I prefer the latter, as I ſhould likewiſe upon the plains, were it not attended with delay and trouble; for upon flat land I have known three or four different kinds of ſoil in one piece: and to invigorate all equally alike, to over-enrich the already luxuriant, or not to give ſufficient vigour to the weak and barren, are ſoleciſms in huſbandry which will with certainty defeat the ends of cultivation.

In ploughing the hills there is labour and loſs of time; more, I think, than would be found in the operations of the hoe: and the cattle are great ſufferers by this practice.

Since this inſtrument has been introduced, the crops are acknowledged to be much later begun, and longer continued, than

than they were uſed to be; and this is owing perhaps to their ſuppoſed facility of labour, by which a larger plant, and with more eaſe, may be accompliſhed.

In former years, it is notorious, that the generality of eſtates began to put the mills about ſoon after Chriſtmas, and all the canes were taken off in the month of April; but now thoſe very eſtates do not commence the operations of ſugar-making before the latter end of January, or the beginning of the enſuing month; and carry on the labours of the boiling-houſe, through rain, vexation, and loſs, to the end of June, and ſome properties even until July and Auguſt,

I do not think that the land, when ploughed, is ſuffered to remain a ſufficient time in fallow: indeed, where a large plant is to be put in, it cannot have time to moulder; and for this, and other reaſons, I would rather have a diminution of acres well cultivated, manured, and planted

planted at a proper ſeaſon, with care, than an increaſe of numbers that muſt, from an augmentation, be ſlightly and careleſsly diſpatched.

Of the real value of manure, and the ſcience of turning cattle, in this inſtance, to account, too many of the overſeers in Jamaica are undoubtedly ignorant. They follow the common practice in every thing they do; and ſo far indeed they may be generally right, as experiment will occaſion trouble, if not expence, and in too many inſtances will be attended with both.

A farmer in England will be ſurpriſed to hear, that from three hundred head of cattle, not more than ſixty or ſeventy acres of land, upon ſome eſtates, will in the courſe of a year be manured; and this too but very ſlightly, compared to the invigoration that is given to that in England.

The practice of folding over cattle at all times of the year, and upon all ſoils, is highly prejudicial to the firſt, and often

hurtful

hurtful to the laſt; for in the rainy ſeaſons it is aſtoniſhing how much live ſtock, particularly calves, if penned upon the hills, are loſt by this practice: and I muſt here give my opinion, although I believe it will be generally ſcouted, that one half of this proportion of cattle, if properly foddered in ſmall incloſures, and theſe incloſures ſhall be well attended, and conſtantly ſupplied with traſh, and the admixture of rich ſoils and compoſts, as is the practice in other countries—it is my private opinion, I ſay, that an hundred and fifty head of cattle, if thus treated, would yield more manure, and that of a more prolific quality, than *double* the number, according to the preſent practice in Jamaica.

There are many, I know, who will call out againſt trouble: but what is trouble compared to expence? The ſaving of cattle, in the courſe of a few years, would enable the planter to purchaſe a ſufficiency of negroes to anſwer every purpoſe that may

may be required from this reformation; and while he contributes to the enrichment of his land, he is making likewiſe an annual addition to his capital; for it is ſolely upon the preſervation, or augmentation, of this, that the planter can either conſider himſelf as independent or affluent.

Upon an eſtate which has two hundred negroes, and about the ſame number of cattle, I do not think it would be proper to put in, one year with another, more than ſixty, or at moſt ſeventy acres of plants: and I ſhould prefer its being completed in the month of November at the very fartheſt, as the ſeaſons are ſeldom favourable beyond that period. Upon old land I do not think that a ſpring plant ever anſwers: it interferes with the crop, it occaſions additional labour to the ſteers and mules at the very time that they require reſt, after the continual fatigues of the harveſt: and, beſides, the time that muſt neceſſarily be given to this operation, would be better employed in cleaning and ſupplying the young

young canes, and in planting proviſions and graſs.

An eſtate that cuts ſixty acres of plant-canes for ſugar, with the ſame proportion of firſt and ſecond ratoons, ought to make, with tolerable ſeaſons, about one hundred and fifty hogſheads upon an average, and from eighty to ninety puncheons of rum. The ſtores from England for ſuch a property ought not to exceed two hundred pounds, nor the proviſions from Ireland one hundred: and of herrings I would recommend thirty barrels for every hundred negroes; and this would be not only an ample, but a generous, ſupply.

If the land be ſtiff (and a great portion of it in Weſtmoreland is of this deſcription), I do not think that a negro will plough more, one day with another throughout the ſeaſon, than a quarter of an acre, all interruptions of rain and accidents allowed. If, therefore, the crop be not finiſhed before the months of June and July, it may eaſily be

be imagined with what careleſſneſs and haſte a plant of ſeventy acres muſt be completed.

Where two or three ploughs are ſet in, particularly upon light and level land, a great deal may be done in a ſhort time: and indeed, when the ſame power is given to that of a different texture, the expedition of the plant will be conſequently accelerated.

The uſe of the plough is not certainly arrived at its period of perfection in Jamaica: it is, without doubt, capable of much improvement to the land, with a proportionate diminution of negro labour: and, as the breed of cattle ſhall be more and more attended to, and an additional quantity raiſed, its operations will become, if poſſible, more general; and it may be a mean of introducing a different mode of cultivation, a different ſyſtem of manure, and may help to turn out riches from the land which prejudice to old cuſtoms, or an ignorance

ignorance of agricultural ſcience may have ſuffered to lie long buried and unexplored.

As an object in landſcape, much may be ſaid in its rural praiſe; for of its particular conſequence, when taken in this view, every admirer of nature muſt have ſeen its variety, and will acknowledge its effect.

When this uſeful and ornamental inſtrument of huſbandry is obſerved to cut a regular furrow upon the plains, it is not unamuſing to obſerve the variety of birds of different plumage and deſcription that follow the ſable lines which the ſhare occaſions, and which peck their living food from the boſom of the ſoil; from that univerſal parent that gives her children ſuſtenance, and which at laſt, as Pliny obſerves, receives them again after their diſſolution into her maternal boſom; and which is conſtantly giving food to the induſtrious, or receiving into peace the perſecuted and unhappy deſcendants of the human race.

When three or four of theſe rural implements are ſtretching a length of furrows upon the barren moor, or flying ſands, we cannot help dwelling upon the induſtry and art of men, which can by dint of toil and perſeverance oblige the firſt to yield abundance, and compel the laſt to turn adheſive, and to put on the face of cultivation.

When we ſee deſerts peopled, and dreary tracts of ſolitude and waſte become the habitations of luxury and wealth; when the ſilence of nature is converted into the buzz of commerce, and from the boſom of penury and want are found to ariſe, not only competence, but ſuperfluity, what a leſſon does it not unfold of the benevolent intentions of Providence!

The earth is niggard of her gifts, that the hand of induſtry may bring them forth; and, however diſcouraged we may be by the ſterile appearance of the ſurface, yet let man reflect, that the mine is buried beyond the reach of cultivation, and that in his progreſs

greſs to the reſervoirs of gold and ſilver, he has paſſed through many ſtrata of earth that would have been productive of the wants and the comforts of man.

When the plough is ſeen to work upon the ſide of a hill, and the negroes are hoe-ploughing thoſe parts that are inacceſſible to the labour of cattle; when the exertions, the impatience, and the hurry of the latter are contraſted with the ſlow and progreſſive motion of the former; one would naturally conclude, that the laſt would turn up more land in an hour than the other would complete in a day: but here there is a ſtriking proof of the advantage of perſevering though tardy labour, over the ſpirts of animation, and the momentary ſpirit of toil.

The intereſt which the plough affords to a Jamaica landſcape, is very little different from that which the traveller will ſee in thoſe parts of Europe in which oxen are uſed in preference to horſes. The former

are more pictureſque animals in general than the latter, and ſhould not, I think, be too frequently introduced into the ſame landſcape; or, if introduced, I would not always have them in the ſame group. The horſe gives a ſeeming ſpirit and a motion to the rural ſcene, and has therefore a particular effect as the principal figure in a ſtorm; whereas the oxen and the ſheep, from their quieſcent natures, have a different intereſt in the calm.

The bull, the heifer, or the ſteer, ſeem to aſſociate uncommonly well with the ram, the ewe, the lambkin, and the goat, and the aſs is likewiſe a great addition, and adds a pleaſing variety, to the pictureſque group; as would likewiſe a ſlouching and a meagre horſe help to fill up the drawing to advantage: but the mettleſome ſteed, or the bounding colt, would interfere with, and diſturb, the quiet aſſemblage, and hence will do better in landſcapes of animation and buſineſs.

Where

Where horſes are uſed in the plough, they do not make the pictureſque and rural appearance that oxen do: they ſeem to be more formal; nor can they indeed be brought to work, on account of the nature of the ſoil, in thoſe countries that produce the greateſt variety of bold and romantic views.

If they toil upon the plain, the path that is marked out for their progreſs is uniform and ſtrait, and is only varied perhaps by an interſecting baulk or village-diviſion in the champaign countries, or by hedges in thoſe that are incloſed: but where the oxen labour, the ſcene is various, and the landſcape different; and the plough, inſtead of drawing out one length of furrow, is ſeen to deſcribe a curve at the bottom of the hill; to emerge from, or to dip into, a woody glade; and now to move along the ſkirts of a hanging wood, within the hearing of the roaring torrent, or the ſplaſhings of the white caſcade.

Not but it is pleaſing to ſee it, when worked by horſes, appear every now and then, and come out into the light, as it were, between the different parts of a broken fence; over which the oak, the aſh, and the elm, are ſeen to throw their aged branches; and among the foliage of which the ſolitary wood-gueſt is heard to breathe its melancholy note, as if in ſad reſponſes to the whiſtling hind, that amuſes himſelf with this vacant muſic, as he cuts out the furrows with a regular and perſevering ſtep below.

Theſe latter images may be frequently obſerved in the flat lands of England; but the mountains in Jamaica preſent a very different proſpect; for Nature there partakes more of the terrors of the ſublime, than of the humble pleaſures of quieſcent ſcenery.

The immenſe herds of cattle that are conſtantly obſerved upon the plantations in this iſland give a particular intereſt to the general landſcapes of the country; and as

as theſe are ſeen to browze in different ſituations, and at different periods of the day, their removal from one place to another will conſequently vary the rural proſpect, and preſent forms and images continually new.

At noon they are generally conducted to ſhade; and this is of various kinds, according to the diſpoſition, and the growth, of the trees by which they are diſtinguiſhed.

The cotton-tree protrudes, when the ſun is vertical, an immenſe and trembling canopy of ſhade; but then it is not in general ſo impenetrable as the logwood and the baſtard cedar, which are of more humble growth, but which conſequently, from their lowneſs, and the nearneſs of their maſſes, afford a more thick and certain umbrage.

The minor beauties of landſcape, that are found in the incloſed and in the cultivated farms of England, are very different,

in every reſpect, from thoſe which are to be obſerved, even after the moſt ſedulous attention, in Jamaica; the ſurface of the latter, where not cultivated, being overſpread with an indeſcribable variety of gaudy, but uſeleſs productions, which, from the rapid vegetation of the climate, grow up with wild and buſhy appearances that rather load the ſoil than ſerve to adorn it.

The flowers of the wilderneſs, in the above-mentioned Iſland, are beautiful, but very few ſpecies are aromatic: there is indeed a kind of wild jeſſamine, that every now and then ſends forth a moſt rich and overpowering fragancy; but the humble productions of the meads in England, ſuch as the crocus and the daiſy, the cowſlip and the violet, have not their counterparts in that latitude: and even the roſe does not poſſeſs the ſame odour and the ſame beauty; nor do its leaves double in any degree of perfection compared to this lovely and modeſt flower in England; a climate which in a particular manner ſeems

ſeems to foſter the diminutive productions of nature, to cover their veſtments with ſplendour, and to fill their cups with ſweets; and which affect the eye and the ſenſes with double charms, in conſequence of their appearance at particular ſeaſons.

When winter's paſt with all its ſnows,
And zephyrs ſpread the wing,
Beneath the hedge the vi'let grows,
The early child of ſpring.

Expanding to the ſunny ray,
Or foſter'd in the glade,
It gives its odours to the day,
Its perfumes to the ſhade.

But oh! when winter ſhall return,
And froſt benumb the vale,
Though ſhelter'd by protecting fern,
No more her ſweets prevail.

Whereas, in tropic climes, the flow'r
That waſtes its hues unſeen,
Droops not beneath the changeful hour,
But boaſts eternal green.

Although no eſſenc'd dew deſcends
Upon its humble veſt,
Yet vermeil leaves, to make amends,
In pride uninjur'd reſt.

The rural objects of Nature in European climates may be obſerved with more convenience and ſafety than they can in warmer latitudes, in which curioſity may lead to danger, and exerciſe be followed by death.

It is indeed much to be lamented, that where Nature has poured forth her bounties with ſo profuſe a hand, ſo few can be gathered in proportion to their abundance; and that ſome of the moſt beautiful and ſplendid of her charms are contraſted, as before obſerved, with difficulty and danger.

The ſilken cobwebs oft invite,
With dewy pearls inlaid,
Th' incautious inſect to alight,
By mimic gems betray'd:

But though the meſh ſo beauteous ſhine,
The fly may poiſon bring;
And thoſe ſoft threads, that ſeem ſo fine,
May yet conceal the ſting.

AFTER the plough, an account of the nature of the ſoils of Jamaica may be likewiſe expected; but this is ſo extremely different, and indeed ſo infinite is the variety, that I ſhall only notice thoſe that are commonly met with in the cultivation of the cane.

Which particular ſpecies of mould is beſt adapted to the propagation of this plant, it will be difficult to determine, as this will greatly depend upon ſituation and ſeaſons.

In the pariſh of Vere there is a kind of blue mould, which I take to be as rich a ſoil, and of as ſtrong a ſtaple, as any in the Iſland; and that it is remarkably congenial to the perfection of the cane may be eaſily imagined from its exceſſive returns when the ſeaſons have been favourable: but

but this part of the country is more ſubject to, and more often experiences drought, than any other portion of the Iſland.

The canes upon this land will ſtand a great number of cuts, without the neceſſity of a ſupply, or replantation; and the produce is as fine as the land is rich. The heat is ſo intenſe in this particular diſtrict, that a ſtranger can very ſenſibly feel, as he rides about the plantations, the reflection of it from the ground; and it is chiefly owing, I believe, to the fervour of the noon-tide rays, that all the fruits, and of the various kinds, are *there* found in the higheſt perfection and flavour.

As the landſcape is in general flat, but, where at all elevated, is covered with the caſhaw and the popinax trees, which may be almoſt conſidered as the ſpontaneous weeds of that region; and as the land is ſo often parched with drought, the river low, and the ſtream dry; it is but ſeldom indeed that

that it preſents any image of pictureſque beauty; and even after rains, when the torrent ſhall tumble from the diſtant mountains, and ſwell the bed of the ſtream, the conſequences which it occaſions in its full and turbid courſe, are thoſe of danger and deſolation, without putting on any of thoſe forms that awaken terror, or (excepting that of momentary apprehenſion) that partake of the ſublime.

The ſoil in the pariſh of Saint David is miſerably poor and barren; and hence there are in it but few plantations; but the features of Nature are grand, prominent, and impreſſive.

In this tract of land, very few ſituations will admit of cultivation, the moſt conſiderable portion of it being a bed of rocks, among which are hardly ſeen any inhabitants but goats: but at every turn is obſerved ſome ſingular appearance of Nature; and, as far as retirement and ſilence

can

can delight, this pariſh is not without its romantic charms.

As the traveller purſues his road through the gloomy and inhoſpitable ſhades of this ſtony region, he cannot fail to admire the towering rocks and the ſpreading trees that grow to an immenſe ſize from their gigantic clefts, and which, excluding the viſitation of the ſun-beams, produce the moſt ſolemn glens that the eye of contemplation can well behold; and while his ſight is arreſted by the pictureſque ſolemnity of its glooms, his ear is amuſed by the melancholy murmur of the woods around.

What pleaſure may not a reflective mind experience from tracing, in idea, the purſuits and the reſources of the feathery inhabitants of the grove, when the branches are made vocal by their murmurs or their ſongs; when the leaves are diſturbed by their paſtime, or their quarrels; or when they riſe in flocks, and cauſe a tremor upon the ſummits of the trees, and leave their partners,

partners, their neſts, their young ones, or their eggs behind, to explore the diſtant vallies or the hills, or to ſteal from the cultivation of the fields, or the waſhings of the beach, their daily food, and hence divide the fruits of induſtry and the acquirements of duty and love, upon their return, with their nurſing and expectant mates at night!

The female, ſitting on her neſt,
  Obſerves her partner fly,
And with a fond, contented breaſt,
  Purſues him through the ſky:
Yet no regret attends his flight,
  Though far his pinions roam;
For they, however late at night,
  Are ſure to waft him home.
But now return'd, and on the ſpray,
  He conſolation brings,
Divides the product of the day,
  Then ſhelters with his wings.

In retired ſituations like theſe, the goat becomes a very intereſting object: picturesque in itſelf by nature, its habits partake of ſcenes that are wild and romantic; and

and as it is the principal figure in regions of ſterility and danger, as it can feed upon the moſt coarſe and neglected herbage, can frolic upon the moſt inacceſſible elevations, and look down from the moſt giddy heights—it becomes a well-adapted inhabitant of ſtony mountains, and the trackleſs waſte of naked rocks, and jutting promontories; and may be even regarded with attention and delight, in the more humble and quiet ſcenes of rural imagery.

There is ſomething extremely reviving to the ſight, and animating to the feelings, when a traveller all at once emerges from the depths of ſolitude and deſolation, and comes out upon the plains of cultivation and abundance; when the landſcape takes a new turn, and every object appears of a different hue, and is diverſified by a different form; when large droves of cattle are ſeen browzing upon the level paſtures, and the hills, by which they are ſkirted, are bending with canes, or the Guinea-graſs,

graſs in bloſſom is ſhaking to the breeze;—when after traverſing a tract of land without culture, a deſert without a torrent or a ſpring, a full river comes pouring down from the mountains, and branched out into numerous irrigations, refreſhes the thirſty, and improves the barren ſoil; and at laſt diſcharges its waters with a meandering courſe, and within the obſerver's ſight, to the ſandy marſhes through which they percolate, or loſe themſelves in the deep abſorbing ſink-holes, from which they reluctantly flow at laſt, and pay their tribute to the ſea.

Between the pariſhes of St. David, and the moſt eaſtern part of St. Thomas in the Eaſt, a great variety of country may be obſerved, and a conſiderable proportion of which will admit of many various and pleaſing kinds of landſcape; the moſt romantic of which, in the neighbourhood of Bath, I have already attempted to deſcribe.

This latter pariſh is very abundant in water; but then the rivers do not flow through ſo romantic a country, nor do their banks afford ſo many pleaſing ſcenes as are obſerved in thoſe parts which I have had more opportunities and leiſure to explore.

Plantain-garden River is infinitely more uſeful than it will be found, particularly upon the plains, to be pictureſque; but then it irrigates one of the moſt fertile parts of Jamaica, and enriches a tract of country, the ſoil of which is inexhauſtible and fine.

Upon its banks are ſome of the beſt properties in the iſland, and perhaps ſome of the moſt valuable ſingle farms, if I may be allowed to call a ſugar plantation by this name, in the univerſe; and as the ſtretch of diſtance upon which theſe ſettlements are placed may be overlooked from the neighbouring heigths, it may be eaſily ſuppoſed how much the charms of cultivation,

and

and the ſurpriſe of diſtance, may be enhanced by a reflection of the opulence which they annually produce.

The greateſt part of this land is diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of brick mould, is inexhauſtible in point of fertility, is of eaſy labour, of an even ſurface, and of a depth of ſoil almoſt unknown.

The ſeaſons that refreſh it are in general mild and regular, although it has, like other parts of the iſland, been of late years unfortunately viſited by hurricanes, and is ſubject likewiſe to be ſometimes overflowed.

In a country that is watered by ſo many rivers, it is natural to ſuppoſe that there muſt be a great variety of falls; and in the rainy ſeaſons theſe ſublime and beautiful objects are very frequently to be met with. I have beheld ſeveral, that have had their local charms; and variety and

ſurpriſe are circumſtances that give an additional intereſt to every ſcene.

How much more ſtriking is a cataract that comes, as it were, all at once upon the eye, but which the ear had previouſly taught us to explore, and which is buried in a night of ſhade, and encompaſſed by torrents, rocks, and mountains—than one that is ſeated near a village or a town, which is obvious from the ſtreet, which gives its daily thunders unnoticed, and which is totally unadorned by verdure and by ſhade.

Seclusion contributes in a great degree to the ſublimity of rural impreſſions; and hence it is that the waterfall at Terney will always ſtrike the mind with more aſtoniſhment and grandeur than that tremendous fall at Tivoli, which is ſituated in the midſt of population, and diſgraced by the deformities of art.

There

There is ſomething awfully ſublime in beginning a journey at the dawn of day, in thoſe romantic regions, in which mountain torrents and caſcades abound; when the eye is arreſted at every turn, and the ear is intereſted by every ſound.

When the traveller firſt leaves the plain, and beholds the river, that lately flowed with a quiet and a dimpling ſtream, begin by perceptible degrees to exchange the tranquillity of its waters, and to forego a ſandy or a pebbly bottom for a channel choked up by rocks; when his ear is kept attentive by the inceſſant falls that ſucceed each other, till at laſt the ſounds increaſing, the glooms prevailing, and expectation alive, he ſuddenly beholds at the laſt romantic turn the fronting cataract diſcharge its mighty ſtream, ingulph the fir-trees and the pines, the lofty and umbrageous products of the mountains, and ſhake, with its unremitting weight of waters, the dark, though capacious, amphitheatre that the rocks and woods have formed around.

The ſoil in many parts of St. James's is uncommonly deep, and ſome of the moſt fertile properties in the pariſh are adjoining to the ſea; a circumſtance rather uncommon, and which, as it ſaves the diſtance of carriage, is of infinite conſequence, and they become of courſe in proportion valuable.

In the neighbourhood of Montego Bay, which is grown into a populous and commercial town, is a tract of land that is uncommonly favourable to the perfection of the cane; and one particular eſtate in this diſtrict is ſuppoſed, in proportion to its ſize, to make the moſt conſiderable and regular returns of good and even produce of any plantation in the Iſland; and it is really aſtoniſhing to hear how long this plant will continue to ſtand, and how greatly it will yield without any apparent trouble or cultivation.

In the internal parts of this diviſion of the Iſland, there are many hundred acres together

together of black-mould land upon a clay, and the ſurface of which is entirely covered with looſe and flinty ſtones; and this I believe to be the moſt durable and profitable ſoil, in all ſeaſons, that is to be met with in Jamaica; as the canes upon it will run up into the moſt luxuriant ratoons, and they will ſtand to cut, and will continue to yield well, without much care or cleaning, for a conſiderable number of years: the flints retaining the moiſture, ſupporting vegetation, and at the ſame time preventing the rapid growth of graſs and weeds.

From ſome of the elevations upon this road, particularly from thoſe that look down upon Montego Bay, and the richly cultivated plains around, are to be obſerved ſome very grand and extenſive views.

As the traveller aſcends the hills, and beholds the ſcenery below him, his eye is loſt in the multiplicity of images, in the ſplendour of the objects, and in the

interminable ſtretch of diſtance, which inſenſibly recedes from the eye, and is at laſt undiſtinguiſhed in the horizon.

The beach is broken by a ſucceſſion of bays; and in thoſe are dotted a number of verdant iſlands, which break the regular expanſe of the pellucid ocean; in the boſom of which may be ſeen, reflected through the waves, and peering, as it were, above the ſurface, a various aſſemblage of broken rocks, adorned with coral, with leaves, and a variety of ſubmarine productions; and which, with the neighbouring mangroves, that throw their dark reflections into the poliſhed mirror, preſent a ſcene of uncommon luſtre, and local beauty; and which aſſume freſh forms and new attractions as the eye deſcends to a level contemplation of their quieſcent charms.

This view is obſerved to arreſt the eye of every beholder: the plantations on the borders of the ſea, which breaks into gentle curves—the town that appears at a diſtance, the

the hills that back the plains, and the mountains that ſwell above the hills, preſent the eye with a proſpect of extent and ſublimity: of extent, upon which the various objects may be minutely and clearly diſcriminated; and of ſublimity that ſinks from the grand into the ſimple, and that is elevated from the ſimple into the ſublime.

The road from which this view is to be obſerved, is not deficient in pictureſque beauty. In the declivity of the hill, that is darkly ſhaded by rocks on one ſide, and by maſſy foliage on the other, is drilled the bed of a hoarſe, impetuous torrent; and which, when the waters are out, is obſerved to tumble in ſucceſſive, though not ſtupendous, falls, and ruſhing through the adjoining ornaments of underwood and ſhrubs, is ſometimes ſeen, and ſometimes loſt; and now the murmurs die away, and now they ſwell with the breeze, until at laſt they become unheard from diſtance, or ſilenced by the more noiſy waſhings

waſhings of the beach, or the roarings of the ſurge.

The road of communication between the pariſhes of St. James and Weſtmoreland is not diſtinguiſhed by much variety of view, or extenſion of diſtance: it rather partakes of that kind of nature that is congenial to the mind of him who is fond of contemplation, and who delights in thoſe ſequeſtered and quiet glooms which encourage thought, and produce the heart-giving comforts of reflection.

As far as lofty trees, and their natural conſequences, expanſive ſhades, are pleaſing objects of landſcape, this journey may be conſidered, by the traveller, as abounding in both, and to be full of theſe ſpecies of rural impreſſion; while the winding path, the riſing hill, the gentle depreſſion, the trickling ſtream, the hollow glen, the ſtony cavern, and the giddy height, have their different effects, and either ſoothe his thoughts by the tranquillity of their appearance, or awaken

awaken in his mind the ideas of ſublimity and danger.

In ſome diviſions of this romantic road, and to break the ſameneſs that would otherwiſe diſguſt, the ſtranger's eye is alternately cheered, in a given and interfering proportion of miles, by the unexpected appearance of a plantation, which for a conſiderable length of way engages his attention, and breaks the long-continued uniformity of thought: he now contraſts the beauties of Nature in a ſtate of cultivation and expence, to thoſe ſilent retreats which human induſtry has left unexplored, to thoſe woods unconſcious of the axe, thoſe hills untrodden by the mule, unbrowzed by oxen, and unenlivened by the goat—to thoſe plains upon which the ſtones have been undiſturbed, and the boſom of which no plough has broken; and according to the temper of his mind, will either prefer proſpects of artificial abundance to the unavailing impreſſions of Nature; or forego the ſplendours of the

ſunny

ſunny plain, with all its adornments of cultivation and expence, to bury himſelf among thoſe glooms which are more congenial to the habits of thinking, and which afford to ſecluſion and penury an advantage over population and wealth.

The firſt opening that lets in the extenſive and highly-cultivated plain of Weſtmoreland, is ſingularly ſtriking, as well as pleaſing; and there are ſeveral objects of rural obſervation around this given ſpot, that, independently of the general view, and diſtinct from the individuality of each other, would much delight and intereſt the landſcape painter.

I ſuppoſe a perſon of this deſcription to be in a manner arreſted by the alternate contemplation of the objects around him; that he ſtops in the midſt of the road, with his pencil in his hand, and wiſhes to ſelect one confined view out of the pleaſing variety by which he is ſurrounded. As yet the extenſive proſpect has not burſt upon

the ſight, but appears over the intervening buſhes as a line of diſtance, unbroken by any object, and of courſe undiſcriminated by any prominent and leading feature.

As he turns back, and directs his view towards the mountains, he perceives a road, overſhadowed on one ſide by lowly hills and ſtraggling trees, and on the other a walk of plantains and bananas; and as the eye looks forward, and pierces into the glooms, he beholds a lowly habitation and ſome ruined huts obſcurely ſituated at the bottom of a winding path, which ſeems to riſe in perpendicular aſcenſion, and to meander through the burying woods, in which is every now and then obſerved a furtive ſun-beam trembling amidſt the ſhades, and ſhowing, obvious to the ſight, a group of mules that wind, under their heavy burthens, their patient and cautious way adown the hills, and come out at laſt in pictureſque proceſſion upon the confined plain that juſt appears to open below, and upon which the waggons and the wains

waine have long remained in peaceful expectation of their uſeful loads.

As he turns to the left, he obſerves a mountain, upon which the magnificent cotton-trees expand their branching arms, and protect with their ſhadows, the minor products of the ſoil below—the plantain-tree, that riſes here and there in ſolitary clumps—the wide-ſpreading leaves of the coco—and the aſpiring tendrils of the yam, through which the watchman is taking his ſolitary rounds, and every now and then attempts to ſtoop, though bent by years and the infirmities of nature, to eradicate the intruding weed, or the matted graſs; and who, after this feeble exertion, retires with a ſlow and a trembling ſtep to his ruſtic hovel, from thence brings out the embers of his fire, and lays the fertile aſhes at the root of his infant ſuckers, which when grown up to a ſtate of maturity are to ſupply his future wants, and which he gathers with cheerful

induſtry

induſtry as the fruits of independency, and the recompence of exertion.

Through the different vegetables that adorn theſe heights, is obſerved, in the rainy ſeaſons, a pleaſing number of petty rills, which, brawling over the pebbles and the ſtones with which the ſoil is covered, diſperſe themſelves in various channels amidſt the different tufts of vegetation, and form in particular parts, where their lucid ſtreams are accidentally collected, a ſeries of ſlowly-winding and ſmall caſcades, which, accumulating as they proceed, urge on a gentle courſe to the bottom of the hill, and from thence flow on in one continued rivulet to its fringed brow, from which they prattle in a haſty courſe adown a ſtony lane, on both ſides ſurrounded by foliage and by ſhade, until the waters are loſt in the porous and imbibing quality of the ſoil below.

A circular baſon, as blue as indigo, and as deep as the regions of death, is obſerved on one ſide to receive the extraneous waters,

waters, and, when full, to diſgorge them upon the neighbouring road, from which they are hurried down in a tumultuous progreſs, and over a declining precipice, to the diſtant and abſorbing plain.

A variety of ſcenes thus obvious and romantic—of retirement within the reach of expoſure, of rocks and mountains overhanging precipices, of elevations ſinking into plains, of terror exchanged for tranquillity, and nature enhanced by art—a variety thus diſcriminated, and thus beheld, there are but few regions that can ſubſtantiate; and which, melancholy to think! it is not in my power, who have ſeen them, to deſcribe.

To the pariſh of Weſtmoreland I cannot be otherwiſe partial than to its rural imagery; and as far as credit can be given to ocular obſervation, and allowances made for natural experience, as far as one individual may obtrude his thoughts on others, and may preſume to dictate from his

his feelings what may be the impreſſions of others; I ſhall be contented to fix my criterion of natural beauty—of beauty ariſing from tranquillity, of magnificence proceeding from terror, of ſublimity occaſioned by deſtruction—to that unfortunate region which I have ſo often contemplated with pleaſure, and looked upon with diſguſt; ſo often obſerved ſmiling with abundance, and blanked by deſolation; ſo often known happy, and ſeen ſunk to deſpair: in which I have known dependents converted into maſters, ſervility exchanged for diſdain, obligations returned with ingratitude, and confidence rewarded by treachery, a broken heart, and the apprehenſions of an early grave.

Of its ſoil I ſhall hereafter ſpeak, and with ſome confidence at leaſt, if not with obſervation; but ſhall previouſly ſay, that the ſea-ſide pariſhes, to which it is on the left and on the right contiguous, are as different in mould and appearance as any that are to be found in the iſland of Jamaica.

In St. Elizabeth's the land is in common too barren to produce in any perfection the ſugar-cane; but then it is admirably adapted to the formation of pens, the beſt of which are certainly to be found in this pariſh, and many of which are replete with majeſtic ſcenery and quieſcent beauty.

A kind of red earth prevails throughout the public roads of this particular region; and as it is only favourable to natural herbage, artificial graſs, and corn and cotton; to the growth and perfection of fuſtic, log-wood, and the various ſpecies of building-timber—theſe are therefore found, where cultivated, or where they ariſe in a neglected ſtate, to attain a proper maturity, and to adorn the plains, and to cover the mountains, which would otherwiſe appear to be entirely barren.

The wild parts are extremely romantic, and preſent views of a very different ſtyle of

of compoſition from thoſe which I have already deſcribed.

The pimento-trees are of natural production, and in ſome ſituations appear to thrive extremely well; although I am led to believe that they are not ſo much attended to as an article of commerce upon the flat land as they are upon the hills and mountains; and as they grow ſpontaneouſly upon particular ſoils, and form, when grouped together, a dark and aromatic ſhade, the ſtranger may repoſe under their branches with delight; but when they ſhow the bloſſom, the fragrance becomes almoſt painfully diffuſe, in ſo much that even at a diſtance, after a momentary enjoyment, it rather becomes an eſſence to diſguſt, than a fragrance to pleaſe.

In the ſandy diviſions of the pariſh, the general landſcape appears to be, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, an ornamented deſert; for although the herbage be not

only ſhort but ſcanty for the paſturage of cattle and of ſheep, yet are there ſhrubs without number for the browzing of the goats, and ſhade and ſhelter for the comfort and the ſafety of other animals.

In waſtes like theſe, the playful thatch and the aſpiring cabbage-tree ariſe in pride of vegetation, and ſhake their leaves in ruſtling tremor to the concert of the winds that murmur round; or at the firſt breakings of the day, when no ſtorm impends, they ſhake off the dew-drops from their tufted ſummits, and adorn the foreſts with their waving plumes.

When the firſt zephyrs of the morn awake,
The thatch is ſeen his fan-like leaves to ſhake;
And the tall cabbage bends, on ſands like theſe,
With ruſtling tremor to the paſſing breeze;
Or looks indignant from his verdant height,
And nods his feath'ry crown to ſtrike the ſight.

There are ſome conſiderable, and one very uſeful river in this pariſh; and which, from the appearance of its waters in particular

ticular places which are darkened by the overhanging foliage, has obtained the appellation of Black; but this property does not by any means preclude it from that tranſparency which is obſervable in other rivers of the country.

Of a confined landſcape, I think one of a ſerene and captivating caſt might be copied from a particular ſituation adjoining to this river, whoſe waters proceed with a deep and tranquil courſe, and which are ſheltered in ſeveral places from the burning ſun by trees that appear to form a canopy over head of refreſhing and impervious ſhade.

A very pictureſque, and the more ſo as a wooden bridge is ſeen from the banks to divide the current of the ſtream, on one ſide of which the proſpect is umbrageous and dark, and on the right, as if delighting in the amenity of the ſcene, a ray of light is obſerved to deſcend from the oppoſite hill, and to hang upon that portion of the

waters into which the reflections of the overhanging arches are daily thrown, and upon the broken and ſhelving borders of which the aquatic plants ſhoot forth their broad umbrellas, and covered over with the matin dews, appear to glow, when irradiated by the ſun-beams, like a bed of changing opals upon a block of emerald.

The exit from the wood to the ſimple and the ſpreading arch of communication above deſcribed, is faintly gilded by the morning light, which marks the legs of the cattle, and which are ſeen by degrees to receive a ſtronger lumination as they burſt upon the view, and catch the rays which break in momentary reflections round.

A loaded boat is obſerved to glide ſlowly through the arch; the herds and flocks are driven towards the banks, and deſcend in a winding line adown the gentle depreſſions of the hill, which is rough with thiſtles and with weeds; and through the opening which the road occaſions, the ſun-

beam

beam ſteals to irradiate the ſcene above deſcribed.

There is a large tract of land in this pariſh that is one continued moraſs, and which, not being deemed fit for any ſpecies of cultivation, is hardly entitled to any deſcription; and there is an immenſe extent of plains which in the rainy ſeaſons is covered with a natural herbage upon which ſheep are known to thrive and to encreaſe in great abundance.

The climate in one particular part of this pariſh is reckoned the moſt reſtorative to convaleſcence of any in the iſland; and, from the accounts that have been uniformily given by thoſe who have occaſionally reſided there as invalids, or who have reſorted to that ſpot upon parties of pleaſure, it may be imagined that the air is as elaſtic and as ſalubrious as any in the world. The heat and inconvenience of a tropical ſun are there hardly diſtinguiſhed; and exerciſe may be taken without languor upon thoſe

level plains (which being dotted over with innumerable clumps of different trees, have the appearance of an Engliſh park), at any hour of the day, without fatigue, or apprehenſion of danger.

It is over this tract of land that the eye wanders when the traveller deſcends May-day-hill, and the confines of which are bordered by the ocean.

In this celebrated view there is diſtance, but not variety in compariſon to the extent. The objects immediately below the eye are too far removed to admit of minute parts, and of picturesque deſcription. The principal lines of beauty are on the left-hand ſide; and theſe entirely conſiſt of the Pedro plains, through which no river flows, and upon which no pond is ſeen: but as ſoon as the flat land is gained (that is, flat comparatively ſpeaking, to the above mentioned, and in ſome parts almoſt inacceſſible, heights), there are many objects of rural imagery that are ſingular in appearance,

pearance, and hence pleaſing from their eccentricity.

Sometimes as the ſtranger journies on between the more painful deſcent of the hill and the actual plains of St. Elizabeth, he is loſt in the ſhadows of ſurrounding rocks and foreſt glooms; and many of the trees that produce thoſe ſhadows, receive their nouriſhment and the means of growth in the boſom of theſe maſſy fragments; and ſometimes three or four at a time are ſeen to ſtruggle together from the ſame fiſſure, and interweave their branches overhead, as they unite their ſtems below; and of theſe ſingular appearances in every part of the iſland, it is hardly poſſible to deſcribe the variety as well as beauty.

The ſcenes obſervable among the pens of this pariſh are found to vary, inaſmuch as many are upon the mountain land, and many upon the plains; but thoſe which partake

partake of both, on account of the value and convenience of proviſion-grounds, and the advantage of guinea-graſs, are the moſt eſteemed.

Upon both there is a variety of landſcapes; but of landſcape not generally marked by ſuch bold and prominent features, as thoſe obſerved in other parts of the iſland: and however pleaſing a good and a level road may be, which winds among an extenſive tract of paſturage, upon which are obſerved innumerable herds and flocks of cattle, and of horſes, of ſheep and goats, in various groups and different attitudes; yet as ſameneſs will follow obſervation, and that which appeared to be a novelty at the beginning of the journey, will begin to fatigue at its concluſion,—theſe pictures by degrees will loſe their effect, and the imagination will look forward to other proſpects, although they may be only gained by perſeverance and fatigue.

That

That land which is not favourable to the cane, proviſions, or the artificial graſs of the country, may ſtill be admirably well adapted to paſturage; and of this there are obvious truths in every part of the iſland. Such a ſoil indeed, although it be not by any means ſo valuable as that upon which an annual crop of ſugar may be gathered, yet will it be found productive of cotton, and if properly invigorated will not give a ſcanty return of corn: but if even the moſt conſiderable part of it be fit for the cultivation of the cane, yet is not that portion of it without its value, which is deſtined to the ſupport of cattle, or that, be it ever ſo poor, that can adminiſter to the more humble wants of a plantation.

The pariſh of Hanover is generally ſaid to be the beſt cultivated of any one in the iſland, and is certainly that which for a number of years has produced the greateſt quantity of ſugar. It is mountainous in many parts, and almoſt hilly in all, and the

the mountains and the hills are equally planted with canes; and ſuch is the predilection that is given to it, that a very inconſiderable portion of paſturage is left for the uſe of the cattle, which are obliged, at the expiration of the crop (in which they have plenty of fodder), to be driven to the diſtant pens to recruit, or fatten. The proviſion-grounds are, notwithſtanding, good and plentiful,

The ſoil that prevails moſt in this pariſh is ſaid to be a fullers earth, which appears, before it is diſturbed, to be veiny like marble; but when worked with the hoe, it cuts like ſoap, and very much reſembles in appearance that ſpecies of marl which is found in the high lands of Suffolk. It is particularly fertile, and the produce made from it is of an admirable quality: if the canes however be ſuffered to ſtand too long upon it, it will be apt to burn.

As far as a general appearance of cultivation can tend to the beauty of landſcape,

ſcape, this pariſh claims a pre-eminent place among views of this deſcription; and the conſtant ſucceſſion of elevations and deſcent cannot fail to vary the objects of nature, and to produce a new picture at every turn.

The ſea-ſide views adjoining to this tract of country are remarkable for the magnificence and the beauty of their forms; and the curving bay, the wooded cove, the ſandy beach, the obvious ferry, the hanging hills, the dotted houſes, and the diſtant ſea, are all objects of diſcrimination, and cannot fail to ſtrike with wonder and delight.

The internal proſpects of the country have likewiſe their variety of charms; and it is pleaſing, from the higheſt elevations to look down upon thoſe that ſink beneath the ſight, and whoſe uneven ſurfaces are plainly diſcerned, and whoſe ſides are by degrees obſerved to be loſt in the plains.

To behold for a circumference of miles the whole face of the country under cultivation, the extreme boundaries on one ſide ſhut in by mountains of inacceſſible height and ſublime appearance, and the confines of the other inſenſibly loſt in the line of the horizon; and this intermediate view divided into different plantations, upon which are obſerved hills riſing upon hills, or loſing themſelves inverſely, and by degrees ſinking into the plains—the buildings ſwelling upon the heights, or half loſt and ſunk in the vallies—the ſmoke aſpiring from the works, the cattle driven in herds over the winding roads that interſect the different mountains, and the groups of negroes employed in their uſeful avocations; altogether exhibit a grand, a various, and a moving ſcene.

The ſoil in the pariſh of Weſtmoreland is extremely different upon different ſituations: upon ſome parts the black mould upon a clay without flint ſtones, and upon others covered with flints, prevails; upon others,

others, a *red* earth or ſmall-ſhot ſoil upon a clay or loom; the *former* of which, if it be well manured, and the ſeaſons ſhall happen to be favourable, will ſometimes yield extremely well; but the latter, be the weather ever ſo favourable, will yield but little, and that little will perhaps be bad.

The brick-mould land in this pariſh, though highly vaunted and highly valued, does not in general anſwer, particularly if it be by the ſide of rivers, in any expected proportion of ſugar to what many other ſoils are known to do. The canes are luxuriant, and are apt, and very early in the year, to fall down; and will conſequently ſucceed much better for plants than ſugar. This ſpecies of earth is rich, but looſe; and what is planted in it will ſtand a long time without decay, and the ſtaple is not eaſily impoveriſhed. It throws up every vegetable ſubſtance with celerity and vigour, and is well adapted to the plantain-tree, which is however, from the little

adheſion

adhesion of the mould, very apt to be lodged with the least wind, and to be deracinated by the smallest flood.

Some of the small-shot land is hardly better for canes than a *caput mortuum*; but then it will produce, in the seasons, a tolerable crop of corn, and at all times good pasturage, provided the weather shall not be uncommonly dry.

The marly lands are exceedingly capricious in their produce, and in plants the return of sugar is in general very moderate; but if there be a good clay underneath, and proper care be annually taken of the young shoots, they will continue to stand a succession of cuts, and will yield better in an old ratoon than if the pieces were put in afresh. This soil is, I think, more subject to the blast than any other; and the sugar manufactured from it, except it be in seasons particularly favourable, is of a very indifferent complexion and

and grain. It produces excellent corn and graſs, and ſome of the inferior kinds of proviſions.

Some parts of the pieces in this pariſh are ſo much covered with flints, that when the canes are planted, it is neceſſary to bring mould from other land to cover them; and it is not uncommon to obſerve two or three different ſpecies of ſoil in the ſame field; and hence will ariſe a difficulty, and too often a miſtake, in the method of cultivation, and in the quantity of manure.

A great deal of uſeleſs labour was formerly beſtowed in picking up the flints that lay looſe upon the land, and in collecting them into heaps; whereas this laſt practice not only disfigured it, but deprived it of moiſture and fertility: and I do not know whether the ſame trouble that was manifeſt in gathering them together, would not be better laid out by

ſtrewing them again over thoſe parts from which they were taken.

Next to cane-land, that ſoil which produces proviſions in the greateſt abundance is the moſt valuable: for my own part, I ſhould at any time affix a more conſiderable price to a hundred acres of fine proviſion-ground, than I ſhould to the ſame quantity, of the beſt kind, that is particularly adapted to the perfection of the cane; and I ſhould hope that in this poſition I am not ſingular.

The prevailing ſoil in the mountains, and that which is moſt favourable to the propagation of the plantain-tree, the coco, and the yam, is a black mould, made rich by the decay of leaves and other vegetable ſubſtances, upon a clay, and thickly ſown with looſe and flinty ſtones; and this kind of earth is generally found upon the ſides of the hills in Weſtmoreland; I mean in thoſe parts in which the ſeaſons are the moſt conſtant. In the glades, the mould

mould may vary; but even there a good clayey bottom is ſeldom wanting; and where this is found, there is always fertility.

The value of paſture-land is various; a piece of guinea-graſs, well fenced-in and watered, is the moſt eſteemed for fattening cattle; it will ſooner give them the appearance of plumpneſs: but when fed upon this artificial production, they do not die ſo well, to uſe the butcher's term, as thoſe that are purchaſed from the natural herbage of the country.

The ſhort and open paſtures are the beſt feeding places in the rainy ſeaſons, and the ruinates after the weather ſhall have been ſome time dry; nor can any eſtate be ſaid to be complete that has not ſuch a reſource as the laſt in time of drought.

Timber land, if it be at no great diſtance from the works, is exceedingly valuable; more ſo, perhaps, than thoſe who have it in abundance may imagine. Upon old

ſettled eſtates the more eſtimable kinds are become, from that waſte which was formerly the conſequence of plenty, and of latter years from the ſpur of diſtreſs or from perſonal avarice, almoſt entirely extinct; and upon thoſe plantations, the works of which were formerly conſtructed of mahogany, there is hardly a tree to be now found for the moſt contracted purpoſes.

The ſubordinate kinds of timber are likewiſe, from the increaſed extenſion of the buildings, from the deſtruction of the ſtorms, and from the continual and neceſſary reparations which they have occaſioned, extremely curtailed in ſize and contiguity; inſomuch that many eſtates that are entirely ſurrounded by mountains, are obliged to look for timber at a very conſiderable diſtance, and are perhaps conſtrained beſides to make a road to carry it out upon ſome diſtant property, or upon a neighbouring pariſh.

The

The meaner ſorts of wood are not without their uſe and value; ſuch as are proper for poſts and rails, or ſuch as will ſupply the negroes with rafters, paliſadoes, or even firing: and here I cannot help obſerving one advantage which *they* poſſeſs over the poor of other countries; for fuel, the moſt neceſſary as well as comfortable article of life, they have at hand without expence, and the procurement of which, at leaſt for their domeſtic wants, is not attended with much anxiety and toil. I may likewiſe add, the bleſſings of a houſe without rent, of clothes and food without purchaſe, and an ample independency of land without the renewals of leaſe, the rapacity of ſtewards, the rigours of ejectment, or the grinding inhumanity of an avaricious, or the profligate wants of an extravagant and unfeeling landlord.

They know not the heart-breaking humiliation of being obliged to ſubmit to haughtineſs and power; and being born to ſlavery, as the Creole negroes are, they

do not inveigh againſt the curſes of dependence.

They do not feel the pangs of generoſity abuſed, of confidence betrayed; nor are *their* feelings wounded by the ſerpent tooth of deep ingratitude, which tears the boſom that afforded protection to weakneſs, and comfort to diſtreſs.

Unacquainted with chicanery, that peſt of ſociety, that exterminator of liberal intercourſe and private peace—that vulture which preys upon the bowels of miſery, and which would ſooner ſtarve itſelf than not find the means to deſtroy; unacquainted with this plague that corrupts the wholeſome fountain of juſtice, what *they* therefore have, they poſſeſs in ſafety and in peace.

The time may come, when humanity will aſſert her rights, and ſet her foot upon the neck of villainy; when thoſe adders that lurk in puſillanimous ſafety, and ſting unſeen, ſhall be brought out to public chaſtiſement

tiſement and open ſhame; when the bitter reflections of a life conſumed in wickedneſs, and the upbraidings of wealth occaſioned by, and accumulated with, the ſighs and tears of wretchedneſs and want, may awaken a death-bed repentance, and open, when too late for compunction, the gates of horror and the abyſſes of deſpair.

Let thoſe who have made an unhallowed uſe of power, and who have converted the enviable ſource of doing good, from the channel of benevolence, to augment the current of colluſion and injuſtice; and who, from the petty motives of perſonal intereſt, have ſacrificed where it would have been but juſtice to ſave—let thoſe who have been actuated by one or other of theſe principles, in time conſider that feeling extends beyond the grave, and that where there has been a worldly iniquity there will not fail to be an eternal judgement.

It may be ſaid that there would not be law, were there not injuſtice; but juſtice

ſhould ſtill be tempered with mercy; and to this end, a court of equity was created to reſtrain its rigours, and to protect the weak from the overwhelming power of the ſtrong: but the commiſſion of a perſonal injury, where no moral wrong was intended, is often practiſed by inhumanity, when it ought to be diſclaimed by law.

The unconſtitutional practice of arreſt for debt is a reflection upon the enlightened manners of the age, and a reproach to a land of freedom; of this the negro is by birth and ſituation ignorant, and has hence one advantage of which his maſter is deprived: and while the latter is open to this diſgrace, and ſubject to its inflictions, the former lies under its protection, and is unacquainted with its terrors.

Thoſe who ſuffer without intentional delinquency, have a *right* to complain; but thoſe who deſervedly ſuffer, ought not to ſpeak. Where the finger of God puts a caveat upon our worldly means, the man of bene-

benevolence will pity, while the intereſted wretch will only meaſure his perſecution by his diſappointments.

The ſituation of a priſoner for debt is the moſt deplorable that falls under the knowledge of our laws, inaſmuch as he may be innocent although unfortunate; and it often happens that the creditor who confines his perſon, ſequeſters his means, and drives him to deſpair, is in fact the the real delinquent, and may have himſelf offended thoſe laws, by extortion, by uſury, and fraud, the current of which he has been enabled to turn by the poſſeſſion of thoſe means which the other wants; for money has been too often found to purchaſe money; nay, it has likewiſe happened that a man's property, in the hands of others, has been uſed as a bribe to his own deſtruction.

If a perſon, from the principles of humanity and friendſhip, ſhall be ſo weak as to become a ſecurity for another, and this laſt

laſt ſhall prove a villain, the innocent man ſuffers, and the guilty eſcapes; and an act of feeling, and a proof of innate goodneſs of heart, is often followed with a duration of pangs from which even the felon is exempted, and between which there is hardly a line of diſcrimination to mark the offences.

A man who ſteals, or commits a murder, is in a ſummary manner tried, and brought to juſtice; he is ſoon condemned, or as ſoon acquitted; but the debtor, whoſe difficulty of releaſement encreaſes with confinement, and who perhaps at the moment of his arreſt was only indebted ten pounds, and had twenty to pay it, will find this original ſum more than doubled or trebled, when he hopes for enlargement, and has found thoſe who were willing to ſatisfy the firſt, but who have not ſufficient power to diſcharge the latter ſum: and this is a hardſhip to which every debtor is more or leſs ſubject.

If

If a man be conſcientiouſly willing to give up all he has for the honeſt ſatisfaction of his legal debts, and it is made to appear, upon the face of his accounts, that he has a ſufficiency to do it, ought one rapacious creditor, whoſe demand perhaps, upon an equitable ſcrutiny, could not be legalized, to obtain and to keep full poſſeſſion of all he has, to the loſs and ruin of the liberal and indulgent? Ought forbearance to ſuffer from colluſion, and humanity be chouſed by intereſt? If the debtor have not wherewithal, from perſonal or real means (and I ſuppoſe this deficiency to have ariſen from calamities which could neither have been foreſeen or prevented, and not from extravagance, play, inebriety, and other vices), ſhould the debtor I ſay, be thus circumſtanced, ought the creditor to have a power, Shylock like, to cut into his heart? Are there wretches in life ſo dead to nature and to God, as not to ſhudder at the bare idea of ſuch enormity? That there are—but here let my voice be ſilent, and let my pen be ſtill.

Peter

Peter the Firſt of Ruſſia, whom the poliſhed kingdoms of Europe were pleaſed to diſtinguiſh at the outſet of his reign by the appellation of Barbarian, enacted ſome laws for the perſonal protection of his ſubjects, particularly the poorer ranks, which would reflect an honour upon a more enlightened age: and let the lover of juſtice compare in this place our inſtitutions upon this head with his.

He inſiſted that lawyers ſhould be employed at a handſome ſalary, that they might execute juſtice, give relief to the injured, and ſupport to the diſtreſſed, without any extortionate fee, or independent reward; and they were obliged, to prevent partiality or affection, to determine the different ſuits in rotation, without chicanery and without delay. If they were ever convicted of bribery, or of throwing impediments in the forms of law, or were guilty of any malpractices which were derogatory to that profeſſional practice which he meant, as being juſt, ſhould be likewiſe conſidered

conſidered as honourable, they immediately underwent the puniſhment of the knout, and were baniſhed with rigour and infamy to the wilds of Siberia.

If our laws were to undergo a reviſion, and were to be made more ſafe and beneficial for the creditor, without the abſolute depreſſion of him who owes; if the rotten branches of the tree were to be lopt off, that the ſtem of juſtice might thence become more vigorous, what glory would not redound to that legal pruner, what ſecurity would not be given to property, and what comfort to real misfortune and to unmerited diſtreſs!

If reſtrictions were to be put upon credit, I mean upon that credit whoſe foundation as well as ſuperſtructure are thoſe of intereſt, there would conſequently and immediately follow a diminution of debt; and out of the thouſands that annually languiſh in the gloomy manſions of confinement and deſpair, there are many who are more entitled to commiſeration than deſerving of rigour; and

and who are not ſo morally delinquent as thoſe who have betrayed them into confidence, oppoſed uſury to their neceſſities, and ſworn to the actual exiſtence of debts which they were conſcious to be illegal, and thus fly at once in the face of juſtice and of God.

That a man who can, but will not, ought to be made to pay his debts, is a ſyllogiſm that the worldly man is daily chiming through all its poſſible changes; and there is not an axiom perhaps of more conſequence to a community, and which ought to be more rigorouſly defined: but then it does not follow that uſury ſhould be juſtified, and that rapacity ſhould be entitled to favour.

Any enforcement, be it otherwiſe ever ſo rigorous, would be leſs diſgraceful and vexatious than that which is vainly expected to proceed from perſonal dureſs; a practice which does not better, but is eventually found to injure the rights of the creditor, as the ſpirits of the debtor are broken,

broken, his labour of courſe ſuſpended, and the only means which he had left, by which the payment of his debts could be effected, are conſequently tied up, and rendered inefficient: the one therefore at laſt loſes what was originally due, and the other languiſhes out a miſerable and an unprofitable life in goal, even though the plaintiff ſhould relent, becauſe he has it not in his power to ſatisfy the unfeeling rapacity of his attorney; and the proofs that might be adduced of this aſſertion are a diſgrace to humanity, and a reproach to the practice of that country in which the ſubject is born to perſonal freedom, but of which it is in the power of a man, from caprice or reſentment, in a ſummary manner to deprive him.

Arreſts will be found, I am afraid, to proceed more generally from the intereſted views of the harpies of the law than the willing rigour of him who has truſted and been deceived; and even among thoſe who look for payment in the ſufferings and deſpondency of the unfortunate, are to be found

found thoſe only who are of the moſt mean and inſolent characters, and whoſe claims perhaps might be combated by law, and overturned by equity: and I think likewiſe that it may commonly be obſerved, that thoſe who have been the moſt obliged, have been ultimately found to be the moſt ungrateful,—and to have occaſioned without compunction, and to have beheld with a puſillanimous malignity and triumph, the heart-breaking agonies of a benefactor and a friend.

I am convinced that there are many who have died, and who daily continue to pay the debt of nature, unviſited of friends, neglected by relatives, and unrelieved by charity, who have reſigned their lives in the manſions of ſhame and affliction with a more quiet and unreproving conſcience than many of thoſe enjoy who have entailed at leaſt dejection upon, if not occaſioned death to, their fellow-creatures; without being thence enabled to ſubſtantiate any good for themſelves, or without having ſecured it in reverſion to their deſcendants.

Of

Of the mere pettifogger the term is ſufficiently diſgraceful to point out *his* practice; and wretches of this deſcription are as much deſpiſed by the humane and honourable profeſſor, as if they were of a different ſpecies, and not more entitled to reproach than followed with contempt.

Of men of character in the law, it would be highly impertinent and unjuſt to ſpeak in any other terms than in thoſe of admiration and applauſe—of admiration, as the indiſpenſable line of practice too often opens the road to numberleſs vexations and ſeverities, which cannot otherwiſe be avoided than by a conſiſtent and perſevering clemency, and an unbiaſſed and conſcientious integrity of heart—of applauſe, as the general, and hence an illiberal, cenſure upon this particular community will not always lead men impartially to obſerve, and to do honour to, the abſtract virtues of the man. Thoſe therefore, whoſe conduct is the reſult of humanity and juſtice, cannot

be ſpoken of in terms of ſufficient kindneſs and reſpect.

Diſtinguiſhed as this country is now acknowledged to be, and beyond, perhaps, any former period, by Judges of talents, of candour, of patience and humanity; and independent as they have been made, to the glory of the preſent reign, in ſituation and in truſt; there is great hope that the aſperities of the law will be gradually worn down, its ſtream refined, and courſe made clear; and that the weeds which have long delayed its current, and made turbid its meanders, may be at length removed, that the waters may ſhine forth in full tranſparency and ſplendour.

It is likewiſe to be hoped, that the web within web, which is as often ſpread for the innocent as it is for the guilty, and which contains the poiſon of the inſect without its induſtry, will in time be broken; and that the inſidious machinations of the concealed artificer that extracts, unſilkworm-

ſilkworm-like, the valuable threads from another's bowels inſtead of its own, will be drawn out from his laboratory, in which he has long continued to work, and cruſhed with all his inſtruments of miſchief beneath the foot, to riſe and ſting no more.

Theſe reflections naturally introduce another, in which every man who honours abilities, and who values juſtice, muſt feel himſelf in ſome meaſure affected: for of one of the greateſt luminaries of the law that this country, or perhaps any other, has ever beheld, the beams, alas! are now declining: how tenderly impreſſive then, and how much to be lamented, muſt be the ſetting of ſuch a day!

Who can reflect upon the failure of ſuch abilities to adorn and to improve the various walks of ornamental and buſy life; of language ſo perſuaſive, of elocution ſo harmonious, and of periods ſo refined, without recurring to the times of ancient Rome, when Cicero either perſuaded, melted, or

overpowered his auditory, by the melliſluous incatenation of his ſounds, or the tranſcendent weight of his all-powerful eloquence!

Who but muſt lament the loſs of talents ſo amiable in ſociety, of purſuits ſo honourable to human nature, of virtues ſo intereſting and ſo uſeful to man, without reflecting how difficult it will be to repair them? But, alas! ſo ungrateful is mankind, that the ſun-beams which ſhall have warmed him to-day, will no ſooner ſet than be forgotten.

The farewell Epiſtle of the Bar to this highly-gifted and impartial Judge, than which a more honourable appellation is not to be found upon the liſt of manly virtues, will ever remain as an affecting memorial of their ſenſibility, and as an amiable record of their reſpect and veneration; and even thoſe who are not otherwiſe connected with the profeſſion, than as it is intended to ſubſtantiate right, and to lead to peace,

peace, cannot help feeling the value of a correſpondence which does equal honour to thoſe who have adreſſed, and to the eſtimable object by whom their addreſs was with correſponding ſentiments, and an overflowing ſenſibility of heart, ſo graciouſly received.

After the dignified retreat of ſo diſtinguiſhed a character, it is however a public conſolation to find the promiſe of judicial abilities already expand upon that ſeat from which ſuch ſtreams of eloquence, and depth of judgement, were known to flow; and great indeed muſt be the merit of him, and for ever remembered *his* talents and *his* name, who ſhall be deemed a proper ſucceſſor to fill a ſtation of ſuch magnitude; a ſtation that requires abilities of various kinds, and which never appears to ſo much advantage as when juſtice is attempered by mercy.

If rigour be neceſſarily found, as it muſt often be, the attendant of juſtice, we ſhould

ſtill conſider that man muſt be ſometimes "cruel, only to be kind;" for by the amputation only of a diſeaſed limb can the body, under particular circumſtances, be preſerved: the ſurgeon therefore who betrays the weakneſs of compaſſion when he is employed in the painful execution of his office, is incapable of duty, and ultimately deſtroys thoſe members which his ſkill was called in to ſave: thus therefore indiſcriminate pity, however amiable it may be in a private life, would be dangerous in a judge, and lead to future enormities, which a calm integrity and firmneſs of conduct, might in the firſt inſtance have prevented; for individual ſuffering ſhould always give way to the general good.

The time muſt come when the gradual decays of nature may awaken alſo the ſentiments of regret towards another Lord, whoſe manly and unremitting integrity of heart, both of which were eminently conſpicuous upon a late trying and affecting occaſion, have long dignified, and ſtill continue

tinue to uphold, another court, in which equity appears to be ſecurely enſhrined, and to which (when the infirmities of life ſhall call him away from a public ſituation) the perſecuted may hereafter look in vain for protection, the weak for ſupport, and the injured for redreſs.

FOR the digreſſions I have lately made, I flatter myſelf that I ſhall, by ſome of my readers, ſtand excuſed; and that they will patiently attend me to thoſe further deſcriptions and remarks which will naturally ariſe from the ſubject; and which will help to ſwell this work, too heavy already in matter and in ſize, beyond my firſt intention; but which has in ſome meaſure ariſen from the uncertain ſituation in which the Weſt-India iſlands at preſent ſtand, and upon which ſubject (however popular and humane) it becomes the duty of every one to ſpeak, who can throw information

upon it from experience, can correct errors from facts, or who can advance any thing in mitigation of thoſe charges of inhumanity towards a fellow-creature, and of impiety towards God, under which the ſellers, the buyers, and the poſſeſſors of ſlaves, ſo generally and ſo unjuſtly labour.

Where enormities are practiſed, and delinquency of heart ſtill continues to prevail, they ſhould be brought out from their ſecret receſſes, and expoſed, if not to chaſtiſement, at leaſt to public ſhame: and as the negroes are ſubject to corporal inflictions, and too often without a crime; ſo ſhould the white people, to whom they are to look up for conduct and example, be not exempted from the puniſhments of impriſonment or fine, where they have been found guilty of a wanton abuſe of power, and have apportioned their caſtigations, not to the extent of the offence, but to the ſavage malignity of an unfeeling and a reſentful heart.

It was my firſt intention to draw a line of ſeparation between the white people and the negroes in Jamaica; but as they are ſo intimately connected and blended together, I find it almoſt impoſſible to divide them: as far therefore as there ſeems to be a natural dependence of one upon the other, I ſhall conſider them as one maſs; nor let the pride of colour be offended, when I obſerve that the planter is infinitely more indebted to his ſlave, than this latter is under obligations to him; and if the firſt be humane from intereſt, and the laſt be induſtrious from principle, I will only aſk, on which ſide does the merit lie?

Before I enter more minutely into this arduous, and the more ſo as it is now become an intereſting, ſubject, I muſt take leave to return to thoſe particulars which claim a preference to thoſe intended remarks; and I ſhall conſequently attempt to reſume, and (if poſſible, after ſuch a digreſſion as I have ventured to intrude) to connect what

I now have to ſay with what has already gone before, and ſhall hope to be more regular and conſiſtent in what may follow.

In adverting to the different ſoils that are to be met with in the iſland of Jamaica, there are ſome particular kinds to which I have not attended, and which indeed do not deſerve a minute deſcription; but all thoſe have been, I think, noticed, that are in preference ſelected for the cultivation of the cane, and its various dependencies; and I muſt beg leave to refer the reader to the Introduction, for a general and ſpecific valuation of the ſugar-plantation, and for an account of the heavy burdens under which its uncertain produce is doomed to labour.

I ſhall now proceed, according to a former intimation, to make ſome curſory remarks upon the climate of Jamaica as felt by thoſe with whom I have happened to be acquainted. I may likewiſe ſpeak from

from the perſonal experience of many with whom I have been more intimately connected; and I do not believe that out of a given number of people, and for the ſame ſeries of years, fewer deaths in proportion can be adduced in any climate.

For the mortality that happens, which is not by any means ſo conſiderable now as it was formerly uſed to be, a great many reaſons may be oſtenſibly aſſigned; but a detail of this ſubject, independently of my incompetency to make it, is inconſiſtent with my preſent plan, which only affects to treat of viſible appearances, without preſuming to dive into the cauſes by which effects have been produced.

The dread of a ſeaſoning, as it is called, has, I think, a viſible effect upon the ſpirits of every ſtranger who viſits the country; nor are the Creoles themſelves, upon their return from England to their native iſland, by any means diveſted of this apprehenſion: and I rather believe that this impending terror,

terror, with the fear of exerciſe, and a too ſudden alteration of diet, are frequently the firſt cauſes that produce languor, and imaginary illneſs, upon thoſe who complain; and that, in fact, not ſo much is to be imputed to the latitude as the alarm which that latitude occaſions. Too many indeed fall early victims, on the other hand, to an immoderate uſe of inflammatory and pernicious liquors; and numbers periſh at the firſt acceſſes of diſeaſe for want of proper care, and medical attendance; whereas, if an experienced nurſe be in time procured, and profeſſional ſkill at the commencement of a fever be introduced, I am apt to think that of this complaint a greater proportion would die in England than would be obſerved, in an extenſive practice, to periſh in Jamaica; but as many people may perhaps differ from me in this point, I ſhall reſt at preſent ſatisfied with my own opinion; for although I can hardly be ſaid to have had any regular health for more than a very few months at a time, for ten or eleven

years

years in that country, yet for ſuch a conſtant indiſpoſition I can aſſign a cauſe; but with which, as it cannot intereſt, I ſhall not preſume to inſult, the attention of the reader.

The climate of this large and beautiful iſland is more changeable than thoſe even who compare the viciſſitudes of northern ſeaſons may be diſpoſed to credit; and who, of conſequence, calculating the annual revolutions of the ſeaſons through wind and rain, through ſunſhine and through fogs, through ſnow and ſleet, through tempeſts and through froſts, will naturally conclude that alterations cannot happen in thoſe regions where the heat is ſuppoſed to be always intenſe, and the cold is not ſuſpected ever to prevail.

It ſhould be in this place remembered that the ſenſations of cold and heat are only relative impreſſions, and are found to vary as much from perſonal feelings, and from individual conſtitution, and from ſituation

of

of mountain, valley, or plain, as from any preciſe idea that the philoſopher, or the naturaliſt, may affix to latitude; and of this aſſertion the different regions of the iſland I am now attempting to deſcribe, can bear a full and authentic evidence.

The ſeaſons, on the ſouthern and on the northern ſides of Jamaica, are almoſt as oppoſite in their periods of harveſt, as are their points upon the compaſs; inſomuch that about the time that the crops are terminated on the former, the proceſs of ſugar-making begins in the latter.

In the ſame pariſhes the heat will vary according to ſituation and to ſoil; will ſometimes receive coolneſs from the ocean; and at other times the breeze that ruffles its ſurface, and the glare that is occaſioned by this inconſtant element, will be almoſt inſufferable.

The power of the ſun is intenſe at ſea, is leſs oppreſſive upon the plains, is more tolerable

tolerable upon the hills, and becomes temperate upon the mountains; but ſtill the compariſons of heat will greatly depend upon the influx of the air which happens to be introduced to ventilate thoſe ſituations into which it is admiſſible, or from which it is, by locality, expelled.

It is not, however, *always* that the tops of mountains are more cool than the ſides of hills; and theſe latter will be ſometimes found more obvious to the ſunny rays than even the plains. The vallies are more generally hot than the level paſtures, and the open fields; the dales are more ſo than the vallies; and the dells would be inſufferable, from confinement and an excluſion of air, did not their particular ſituations at the ſame time defend them from the ardours of the vertic ſun.

The heat in Italy and Spain is often more oppreſſive than I have ever felt it in Jamaica; and I think that I have ſuffered

as much from it in Switzerland, and in England, in the dog-days (particularly once in an excurſion through the ſandy parts of Norfolk), as I have ever done in the Weſt-Indies at the moſt inclement ſeaſons of the year; and the cuſtom of taking ſieſtas or naps in the afternoon, which ſo much prevails in the above-mentioned countries, is now univerſally exploded (excepting by old people, who are attached to ancient manners, and whoſe infirmities require repoſe) in thoſe parts of the Iſland with which I was at all acquainted.

When the north wind ſets in with regularity, and continues to blow for any length of time, there are but few climates, during this agreeable period, that can be more pleaſant and refreſhing than that which is the ſubject of theſe pages: the ſun is not, at that time, immediately vertical, and the intenſity of its rays is allayed by flitting clouds and paſſing ſhowers, which, while they ſerve to brace up the innervate ſyſtem, at the ſame time exhibit

a conſtant variety of effects upon that diverſity of landſcape which in many parts, or indeed all over the iſland, is obſerved to glow with ſuch vivid and enchanting ſplendour.

At this particular ſeaſon the mornings and the evenings, more eſpecially among the mountains, are not only temperate, but are often cold; inſomuch that a great coat is by no means a cumberſome appendage of dreſs; nor is a counterpane an article that can be diſpenſed with at night; while a fire, throughout the day, becomes not only a cheerful, but an uſeful companion.

I have known it ſo chilly, even upon the plains, and in almoſt as hot a ſituation as any in the Iſland, at the time of the blowing of this wind, that I have found exerciſe, ſolely taken for the purpoſe of warmth, not only comfortable, but abſolutely requiſite; and at this particular ſeaſon, and indeed at all times of the year, cloth coats are worn by the old and infirm,

and are now preferred as dreſs by even the healthy and the young.

There are but few climates that admit of ſo many changes in a day as that which I am now deſcribing is found to do in the rainy ſeaſons. Although the mornings be chilly, yet, from about eight o'clock until ten, or, in other words, before the ſea-breeze begins to ſet in, the heat is oftentimes almoſt ſuffocating: but if a perſon happen to be upon the ſea-beach, or upon any elevation open to its influence, it is hardly poſſible to conceive any ſenſation more reviving than the firſt impreſſion of the air, which imperceptibly gains ſtrength by time, invigorates the ſpirits, encourages exertion, and diſpels that liſtleſſneſs and languor which would otherwiſe oppreſs labour, and melt the body, however inured before to induſtry and toil.

The effects of the ſea-breeze, as connected with the varieties it occaſions in the landſcapes of the country, are only different

different from the norths in the gentleneſs of aſpiration: the latter ſhake the productions of the earth with noiſe and motion; but the former pays its ſtated viſits to the canes, the plantain-trees, and woods, with a pleaſing and a melancholy murmur: *this* ruffles the current with eaſy ripples, which again ſubſide into a ſmooth and poliſhed expanſe as ſoon as the laſt breathing dies away; but *that*, more boiſterous in its approach, and importunate in its ventilations, conſtrains the uplifted waves to daſh with fury upon the rocks, or to break with heavy billows upon the indignant and reſounding ſhore.

I have already taken notice of thoſe alterations of the climate which almoſt daily happen in the rainy ſeaſons,—the chilly dawn, the interval between that and the commencement of the ſea-breeze, and the ſudden effects the laſt has when immediately ſucceeding the former: I ſhall therefore now mention the other varieties

of the atmoſphere that are conſtantly produced, and alternately obſerved.

When the clouds begin to gather, and to prepare themſelves for the burſting deluge, the ſighings of the breeze diſcontinue, as it were, at once, and a temporary pauſe enſues. The eye looks with anxiety for the firſt flaſh; the ear liſtens attentively to catch the diſtant thunder; and the heat, while they are thus brewing the ſtorm, and the face of nature is darkened by their ſable and impending ſhadows, is violent in the extreme: but ſo ſoon as the overcharged and burſting maſſes begin to pour down their watery contents, and the ſhowers rattle upon the ſhingles, and overflow the plains,—the earth is irradiated by momentary and terrific lightnings, the air is, in a manner, rent aſunder by the deafening and inceſſant peals which break like tremendous artillery around; the oppreſſion of the air begins to be removed, and a ſudden chill ſucceeds, and by an immediate

contraſt

contraſt very ſenſibly affects, and in ſome inſtances revives, and in others diſtreſſes, the feelings.

Should the rains diſcontinue after their uſual deſcent of one or two hours, the ſun again darts forth with a plenitude of rays; the clouds at their departure put on a great variety of beautiful and aerial forms, and breaking among the mountains, and trailing over their ſummits, very frequently encounter the water-ſpout in their progreſs, and diſperſe together their contents in the air.

The paſtoral world ſeems to ſmile with renovated charms; the trees, without any ſenſible viſitation of the breeze, diſencumber themſelves at once of their pearly honours, which the glowing beams illuminate, and make appear like ſhowers of deſcending gems, which retain their luſtre in their deſcent, but fall at laſt to the ground to ſhine no more.

If to the varying pores we bring the day,
Stones become gems, which once in darkneſs lay.
The brilliant only waters on the ſight,
Reflecting back the ſun's prolific light.

After the rains ſhall have ſubſided, the breeze will frequently continue its feeble but refreſhing efforts until the evening, and at the final departure of the ſunny rays will imperceptibly decline, and die away; and between this time and the ſetting-in of the land wind, a different ſpecies of heat will be obſerved; and the patience of domeſtic ſociety will be conſequently tried by ſucceſſive flights of cock-roaches, winged ants, of ſand-flies and muſquitoes, the aſſaults of which, and the fumigations that are vainly uſed to diſperſe or to extirpate them, contribute to make an evening after rain in that latitude a ſtate of bodily impatience, and of fretful but unavailing complaint.

The land wind in general begins to blow ſoon after the ſea-breeze has diſcontinued its aſpirations; and as it commonly continues

tinues with freſhneſs through the night, it renders thoſe ſituations in which it can gain admittance, ſometimes cool, and always pleaſant.

The heat of the nights in Jamaica, to ſpeak from my own experience, I do not think at all inſufferable; nor do I recollect that, during a reſidence of nearly thirteen years in the iſland, I was as many times incommoded by its oppreſſion. A free paſſage is generally left for the admiſſion of air; but, at ſome particular periods, the venetians are ſhut, and a counterpane, and ſometimes a blanket, where before rejected, are then deemed comfortable at leaſt, and are by ſome people thought to be indiſpenſably neceſſary.

The air is ſo ſubtle in ſome particular ſituations, that a flannel waiſtcoat cannot be well diſpenſed with; and the *dews* in the mountains are ſo heavy, and the fogs ſo impenetrably thick, that the loſs of a

great coat will be ſenſibly felt; and the different articles of dreſs that the traveller has occaſion to wear in the morning, become ſo cold and damp as to make the ſenſation of them uncomfortable to the body; and yet I could never learn that theſe latter circumſtances were followed by ſickneſs, although an expoſure to the *firſt* is attended with danger.

The climate of the mountains is always temperate, compared to that of the plains; but even upon theſe it will likewiſe vary according to aſpect; and indeed a regular change throughout all the gradations that different latitudes can occaſion in moderate regions, ſhort only of congelation, may be fought for, and found, in one or other of the diſtricts of Jamaica, from intenſity of heat to moderation of warmth, and at laſt to cold that will chill at leaſt, although it may not be ſufficiently penetrating to benumb.

Whether

Whether the mountains or the plains be the moſt healthy, can be only ſuggeſted by partial experience; the population of the former being ſo very inconſiderable, compared to that of the latter, that longevity, aſcertained by fact, cannot be with ſatisfaction determined.

There are many people who retire at particular ſeaſons of the year from low-land ſituations to thoſe that are more elevated; and as there are not many who make their conſtant reſidence all the year round upon the latter, it would be difficult to eſtabliſh that as a fact which may with better reaſon be only conſidered as conjecture.

In the rainy periods I ſhould prefer the mountains, notwithſtanding the difficulties of acceſs, and the inconvenience, if not the fatigue, of exerciſe: in the time of the norths I ſhould chooſe the plains, as it may there be conveniently taken without either.

Much

Much has been ſaid of the inſalubrity of this particular climate; and it muſt be confeſſed that it has been for years, although perhaps not quite ſo much as the Eaſt-Indies, the grave of Europe: but for the mortality that has happened, and that ſtill continues to deſtroy the inhabitants of more northern regions, many reaſons may be adduced, but the inveſtigation of which more properly belongs to that profeſſion to which the explanation of cauſes and the effects of diſorders, whether they be the conſequences of latitude, or whether they depend upon other circumſtances, can be only referred.

There are many particularities that are obvious in the general conſtitution of man, which we all know by experience will vary with climate, aſſume freſh habits from an exchange of food, and take a different turn from an alteration of hours, of exerciſe, of occupations and purſuits; and theſe ſhould be impartially weighed before we arraign the

the intemperance of a latitude, when in fact we ought to calculate the mortality of its inhabitants by the imprudence of the man.

Europeans ſtand in ſuch dread of a ſeaſoning, that they too frequently, upon their firſt arrival, forego at once their former habits of life, and exchange the cuſtom of good living and of exerciſe for the more pernicious ones of unneceſſary abſtemiouſneſs and deſtructive repoſe.

Exceſſes are, certainly, in all countries, and at all times, to be carefully and unremittingly eſchewed: but it often happens that nature rather requires a regimen that will reſtore, than one that will debilitate, the animal ſyſtem; for the vigour of the nerves, when once deſtroyed by the ſickneſs, and conſequent languor of tropical climes, will ſeldom recover their former tone; and hence it is that thoſe liquors that weaken the ſtomach, ſuch as raw and new ſpirits in particular, engender diſorders of a painful and a fatal tendency, than which

which none has ſwept off a more melancholy proportion, in a given time, of Europeans, than the dry cholic, a diſeaſe which is now, in a manner, expelled from the country by the fortunate introduction, and more general uſe, of honeſt porter and Madeira wine.

In thoſe latitudes in which the animal ſpirits are ſo much depreſſed, and the vital functions are ſo much weakened by a continuity of heat; where the waſte of nature, occaſioned, as in ſome particular ſubjects, by a conſtant diſſolution of the ſolids; where ſo great a conſumption of the ſupports and energies of life are ſubject to ſuch conſtant diſarrangement and decay—we are conſequently taught by phyſical experience, that nothing but ſubſtantial and wholeſome diet will reſtore the nerves to their former tenſion and elaſticity: hence diluting liquors, ſuch as punch, and wine and water, are not reckoned by any means ſo wholeſome, and they are certainly leſs nutritive, than wine and beer.

The

The man who perſeveres in a regular medium between abſtemiouſneſs and intemperance; who does not dread the ſun by day, nor brave the dews by night; who is convinced that exerciſe conducts to appetite, and that that, undepraved, is the ſymbol of health; who does not ſuffer fatigue to overcome his body, nor languor to depreſs his mind; who does not encourage the little errors and omiſſions of his negroes to ruffle, to fret, and irritate, his diſpoſition; and who, more than all, does not murmur at the diſpenſations of Providence when he ſees a valuable ſlave cut off by accident or diſeaſe—the man, I ſay, who can thus exerciſe his philoſophy, may paſs his life with as much health, and attain as vigorous an old-age in Jamaica, as the inhabitants can poſſibly do in any other clime.

Of men whoſe years have been extended beyond the common calculations of nature, there are many inſtances, among the negroes as well as the white inhabitants of that iſland;

iſland; and I have frequently heard it remarked, that the lives of many people, whoſe infirmities would have led in all probability to an early grave in England, have been prolonged by the genial and reſtorative warmth of that country.

The negroes are certainly, in themſelves, a healthy race of people; nor are they by any means ſubject to that multiplicity of diſeaſes which ſhake, undermine, and at laſt deſtroy, the conſtitutions of the inhabitants of the more frigid regions. Many are liable to rheumatic pains: but of thoſe afflicted with the gout, I have not, within my own perſonal obſervation, met with one; and I greatly fear that conſumptions, when they happen, are more often the conſequence of inanition, than of colds neglected, or of a natural tendency to this diſeaſe in the patient and afflicted ſlave.

The negroes are certainly better attended in Jamaica, in ſickneſs, than the generality of

of people in any country which I have had the fortune to viſit, and ſhort of power and opulence, ever are; and the better ſort of practitioners in the Iſland, I mean thoſe who have received a regular education, and have made ſurgery and phyſic their ſtudy and profeſſion, are as intelligent and ſkilful, as patient and humane, as are to be met with, among profeſſors of this uſeful and reſpectable claſs, in any other country.

If a negro be afflicted with a diſorder of an alarming magnitude, the doctor, who attends the plantation, will continue with him to watch the progreſs of the diſeaſe, will direct, and ſee given to him, proper medicine and wholeſome food; and will not leave him until he ſhall have pronounced the danger over. Some individuals indeed have ſuch extenſive practice, that they cannot always perſonally give that ſtrict and regular attention that the occaſion may require: if therefore ſubordinate ſkill may not be ſucceſsful, yet the alacrity of duty is at leaſt conſpicuous; and

where

where a man exerciſes his profeſſion to the beſt of his talents, and ſhows a willing ſolicitude, and diſcovers a humane diſpoſition towards his patient, it is as much as juſtice can require.

The plantation doctors certainly labour under ſome aſperſions which I do not think they deſerve, and are ſubject to ſome mortifications and difficulties from which a liberal profeſſion ſhould be exempted; and ſome ſtrictures upon this ſubject might with propriety have found their way in the future courſe of theſe remarks.

It is very notorious to thoſe who have long reſided in the Weſt-Indies, and who are acquainted with the endemial diſeaſes of the country, and who, from a long and a minute obſervation of thoſe to which the Africans are ſubject, that many of this latter deſcription import from their native climate, diſorders which have been long contracted, have been neglected, become deſperate, and hence incapable of cure.

Many

Many are ſwept off by contractions thus imported; ſome fall the early victims to a change of climate; and others lay the foundations of death by an inordinate uſe of inflammatory liquors: ſome are worn down by watchfulneſs and fatigue; and many, too many, I fear, are loſt through want of that common ſuſtentation, in the times of hurricanes and drought, which the juſt decree of Providence deſigned for all, but of which the patient and the humble are too often deprived by the neglect or inhumanity of men.

Of the mortality among the African ſlaves, much, in this age of public commiſeration and of private feeling, has been lately written; and too much has perhaps been ſaid. Exaggeration has precluded the poſſibility of contingencies, and the glow of humanity has not ſuffered the coolneſs of reaſon to calculate the proportionate decays of nature; and there are ſome people who ſeem to think that negroes are

exempted from the conditions of humanity, and would never die were not their deaths occaſioned by human cruelty.

I much fear (as I dread the conſequences) that a laudable wiſh to remove imaginary evils will beget others of ſerious concern, if the errors of ideal commiſeration be not in time corrected; and the perſonal ſecurity, and the feaſible comforts, of the ſlave eſtabliſhed upon a more permanent foundation than that of declamation without argument, a complaint of grievances where they do not exiſt, an indiſcriminate charge of cruelties which may have been detected in individuals, but which do not in the general maſs prevail; and of abolition, the conſequences of which will preſs down with accumulated labour, and bring to an early grave at leaſt 450,000 ſlaves who are already domeſticated in our iſlands. And this will be the conſequence—of what? A ſpeculative ſenſe of humanity towards a race of men to whom it is our intereſt to be

be kind, and who probably labour under more oppreſſion in their native country, and who ſlumber in the ſhades of ignorance, when they might be brought forth to perſonal protection, the peace of domeſtic ſociety, and may be inſtructed by religion to conſider themſelves as men.

There are many ſenſible and benevolent perſons, who have engaged with an honeſt zeal in this very popular ſervice, who profeſs to be Chriſtians in theory, but who unluckily do not much contend for the practice: for the conſolatory and the certain dependence upon a future ſtate, which religion can alone inſure, can never pervade the boſom of an African in his native ſoil, to ſupport his indurance there, and to teach him a dependence upon his hereafter: a removal, therefore, from thence might ſecure him comforts of which, from ſituation, he muſt be at preſent ignorant, and hold up thoſe which in a future ſtate may be everlaſting.

It has been contended, that the population of our islands may be preserved without the introduction of foreign slaves; and one or two properties have been quoted as a corroboration of this fact: but what is the partial adduction of three or four, to the calculation of one thousand and sixty-one sugar-estates, which are now settled in Jamaica alone?

Some singular circumstances of soil or situation, and other corresponding causes, might have favoured this increase; that part of the country might not have been visited by hurricanes and droughts, and their constant attendants, famine and disease; the land might not have required much cultivation and labour, and might have been incapable of making much produce, and hence of calling forth much exertion: so that one exception, that begets hypothesis, is suffered to stand as a datum to substantiate general facts.

The

The accidents alone to which the negroes are ſubject, and the good in particular more than the worthleſs, would be a melancholy bar to the population of the country; the numbers that are annually killed by lightning, by the fall of trees, by the ſudden riſe and rapidity of the torrents, and by the numberleſs contingencies to which their ſituations and expoſure at all ſeaſons of the year muſt make them ſubject, would influence in a conſiderable manner their decreaſe;—but when the more heavy calamities of the iſland are taken into the deſcription, I ſhould hope that ſome compaſſion would be felt for the planter as well as for the ſlave, as, by the preſervation or the loſs of the *latter*, the *former* can be ſaid to ſtand or fall.

The negroes that were ſuppoſed to periſh in the different ſtorms that happened in Jamaica between the years 1780 and 1787 and by the conſequences that fatally enſued, were eſtimated at 15,000 (the whole amount in the iſland being 255,700);

and the diſorders occaſioned thereby, the ſtagnation of population in conſequence of inanition, the abſolute want that brought ſome, and the deſpondency that hurried others, to the grave, together with the additional labour that fell upon the ſtrong in conſequence of the inability of the weak, might be calculated, without exaggeration, at ſeveral thouſands more.

We will only ſuppoſe that the negroes, upon ſeveral of the properties which were viſited by this calamity, had been previouſly indulged to the utmoſt; that their work was not proportionate to their ſtrength; that, out of a principle of humanity alone, only one hundred hogſheads of ſugar were made, when without exertion they could, from corporal powers, and from a ſuperfluity of proviſions, and the comforts of clothing, have made two: yet in times of dearth the whole amount muſt be fed; and thus their diſtreſſes would be proportionate to their numbers, and the mortality not lightened by the little produce that would be

be comparatively made. If therefore an eſtate cannot preſerve its population by a given number of ſlaves, how is it to continue it when one fourth perhaps or more ſhall be ſwept off in one year by a calamity and its conſequences, when the ſame calamities and the ſame conſequences may occur, as was unfortunately the caſe, and with only one exception, for ſeveral years?

I wonder it has not been alledged, that it is cruelty in the extreme to bring them from their native country, in which we do not hear that ſuch ſucceſſive ravages have been committed by the elements, to expoſe them to the fury of the winds, and the additional terrors of famine and diſeaſe in another region, in which they muſt be dependent upon others for the preſervation of that life, which in their own would not have been ſubject to danger!

Conſidered in this light, their exile (becauſe in many inſtances, if not in moſt, it was involuntary) cannot help ſtriking the

breaſt of the humane, with very juſt and feeling impreſſions: the right of man to remove a fellow-creature from ſafety, to place him in a ſituation of actual danger, may here be combated upon the ground of natural liberty and perſonal juſtice, and will certainly triumph over the language of neceſſity; but here the advocates of humanity appear to be ſilent, as indeed they ſhould:—they have a right to arraign the mortality occaſioned by the cruelty of men; but it is their duty to bend without complaint to the awful inflictions of Heaven.

To continue the cultivation of the Weſt-India iſlands as they now ſtand, and to keep up their preſent extent of produce, will be impoſſible without an importation—without an importation thoſe ſlaves thereon will gradually diminiſh, the crops of courſe decline, and the population, as the produce, will neceſſarily be, in the courſe of no inconſiderable number of years, extinct and at an end.

If

If a prohibition were to be only impoſed upon the African trade for a few years, than which no meaſure could give more effectual relief to the planter, the eyes of many would be then opened, which appear to be at preſent blind, to the true intereſts of their country; and they might then find that their humanity began at a wrong end; and that, while they are traverſing ſeas in queſt of ſpeculative philanthropy, numbers of their own condition and colour ſtand more really in want of that protection and fellow-feeling which, from motives of pure and unbiaſſed pity, they are anxious to extend to the inhabitants of Africa.

If abolition, unconditional, unqualified abolition ſhall take place, our intereſt in the Weſt-India iſlands muſt be at an end; ſeventy millions of property will wear away with time, and be ſunk at laſt; the revenue will ſuffer an annual diminution of three millions at leaſt; the price of ſugar, which is now become a neceſſary article of life, muſt be immediately enhanced; diſcontent-

ment

ment and diſſatisfaction may diſmember the empire, from which too large a jewel has been lately torn; the neceſſity of additional taxes may puzzle the miniſter, divide the legiſlature, and diſtreſs the people, who, indignant perhaps at exactions at home, which might have been provided for by foreign reſource, may become diſaffected to government, renounce their country, and take refuge in a neighbouring kingdom, which may profit from our weakneſſes and combat, and laſtly overpower us with our own ſtrength.

Next to abolition, emancipation comes as the ſecond innovation upon the liſt; for it is natural to ſuppoſe, that the ſame ideas of benevolence that will cut off the communication between Africa and the Iſlands, will extend to the latter;—and that the negroes, all at once, whether they will or no, or without the adduction of any proof that liberty will make them happy, are to be enfranchiſed, and independent of labour and of men, let what will be the con-

conſequence to thoſe whoſe property they are, under whoſe government they live, and by whom alone they can be protected and ſafe.

It ſeems to be forgotten, that the colonies were planted, were peopled, and encouraged, by proviſional laws enacted in their favour by the legiſlature of England, under the faith and guarantee of which many thouſands of people have emigrated from their native countries, taken up and purchaſed lands in thoſe regions, cleared, built, ſettled, and planted at their own expence, depending upon the ſhipping of Great-Britain and of Ireland for ſupplies, and freighting thoſe veſſels home with a barter that has opened a new channel of wealth, which for a century at leaſt has flowed with one rich and augmenting ſtream to fertilize the mother country.

Is the national honour to ſuffer for the ſpeculation of individuals? Is the ſacred word of the legiſlature to be frittered away by

by the ſhadowy ſuggeſtions of humanity, when the real ſubſtance of perſonal ſafety, of perſonal protection, and the comforts that ought to flow from religion, ſhall be ſacrificed?

Aboliſh emigration; and then ſee whether there will not be thouſands of the Britiſh ſubjects who will ſtand in need of employment, and who will conſequently require bread!

If thoſe who have left their native land in ſearch of employment and wealth in diſtant regions, have found their means with their induſtry increaſe; if thoſe means be cut off when ſubſtantiated; if that induſtry be diſcouraged when become habitual,—the folly of emigration in the firſt inſtance will be then apparent.

It ſhould be conſidered, that the perſon who acquires a competence in another country, does not draw any wealth from his own, at the ſame time that what he makes,

makes, or at leaſt the greater part of it, flows back again to enrich the parent ſtream; and the numbers of people in Great-Britain (particularly in Scotland, which ſeems to be more marked for the perſevering and ſucceſsful induſtry of its inhabitants than any other part of the world) who are dependent upon, and ſupported by, the colonies, would perhaps ſtartle the calculator, and convince the man of reflection, that large portions of land have been cleared, cultivated, and peopled, by the wealth that has been acquired in the Iſlands; and this fact may be eaſily aſcertained and proved.

What will be the firſt conſequence of emancipation? The indiſcriminate ſacrifice, in all probability, of the white inhabitants; or at beſt, ſome may be retained to expiate former ſervitude; the cuſtoms of ages will be inverted; and the people of our own colour and religion will become the degraded and the uſeleſs ſlaves of thoſe who

who formerly looked up to them for protection, food, and comfort.

What would, in the ſecond place, become of the negroes? Driven as they would be from their native homes, their hereditary grounds, and ſtripped at once of their perſonal poſſeſſions and domeſtic joys, they would ſet fire to their houſes, deſtroy their proviſions, live in open war, and defiance of each other, and after having exterminated thoſe of another colour, would by degrees extirpate thoſe of their own; and thoſe few who ſhall have ſurvived the general maſſacre, muſt ultimately ſtarve; and this gradation of horror, all thoſe who are at all acquainted with the diſpoſition of negroes muſt be convinced would eventually follow.

There are but few who have been domeſticated upon a plantation, who, when humanized, do not very ſoon feel the curſes of dependence; for that ſtate is among the moſt

moſt woeful of human ſituations which is obliged to forego the reſources of perſonal labour, to depend upon the fortuitous and inſulting benevolence of others.

With the acquirement of liberty, the ſlave, as a natural conſequence, immediately loſes his houſe and ground, and is no longer allowed the plantation clothes and proviſions; and if this fatal gift be tendered at an extended period of life, the conſequence will be ſoon felt by the anticipation of neglect and famine: and if the object of miſtaken compaſſion be even in the vigour of life, his freedom will give a new turn to his manners and purſuits; he will become indolent and worthleſs, and will neither work for his family nor himſelf; will loiter about the ſtreets, get drunk, pilfer, ſteal, or murder, and end his days at laſt in a work-houſe, or pay upon the gallows the forfeit of his *involuntary* crimes.

To

To ſuppoſe that the land in Jamaica, or any portion of it, can be worked by the free negroes, or the people of colour, is abſurd in the extreme; as thoſe of this laſt deſcription who have been ſlaves, are generally indulged about the houſe and offices, and have not perhaps been ever once ſeen to labour in the field; and the colour of the mulatto, his birth, and education, naturally exclude him from the poſſible ſeverity of toil.

Independently of theſe ſuppoſitions, they will be generally found to be either too young, or too old, for ſuch laborious exertions: but were it otherwiſe the caſe, the want of that ſleight which attends the practice of manual labour, and that expoſure to the heat and cold which are alternately experienced in the ſame day, would render them helpleſs in one inſtance, and incapable of any ſteady and efficient application in another.

Hold

Hold out what recompence you will to free negroes, yet ſtill they will not work: to make them labour in the field, would be impoſſible; when they cannot, but with difficulty, be prevailed upon to exert themſelves in thoſe mechanical trades in which they were brought up, notwithſtanding they may earn thereby from five to ten ſhillings a day.

I am convinced that there are many negroes in Jamaica, and perhaps entire bodies of them, upon different, I will go *farther*, and ſay upon *many*, nay farther *ſtill*, and ſay upon the *generality* of eſtates, who would not accept of emancipation, if they were to be previouſly informed that they muſt in conſequence reſign thoſe houſes that were built by their anceſtors, forego thoſe grounds that were ſettled by their forefathers, and which have been handed down for years, and become the inheritance of the ſame family: for negroes abſolutely reſpect primogeniture; and the

eldeſt ſon takes an indiſputed poſſeſſion of his father's property immediately after his deceaſe. And here I muſt likewiſe obſerve, as I have a pleaſure in the ſuggeſtion, that they are in general attached to their families, that the young will work with cheerfulneſs to maintain the ſickly and the weak, and that they are much diſpoſed to pay to age reſpect and veneration.

In Jamaica there are ſuppoſed to be 10,000 free negroes and people of colour, which will about average 500 in each pariſh; out of which, if there were but 100 of the latter capable of the cultivation of the ſoil, or of engaging in plantation buſineſs, it would, in my opinion, very far exceed the calculation. What then muſt be the cultivation of a pariſh conſiſting of eighty or ninety ſugar plantations, beſides one hundred other ſettlements, that is to depend upon the manual labour of ſuch an unſeen proportion, and compared to the exertions of 18,000 negro ſlaves?

The

The conſequences that would attend abolition, would be trifling in their effects to thoſe which would follow emancipation; and what would happen in ſuch a caſe to the white people and to the negroes, has been already foretold, without the inſpiration of prophecy: nor do I even think that an indulgence to the negroes, as in the Spaniſh ſettlements, to work out their own redemption, would be attended with ſalutary effects in our colonies. Deluded by the ſound of liberty, the inconſiderate would ſcrape together their laſt means to purchaſe it, and would afterwards lament the acquirement of a ſhadow by the loſs of a ſubſtance: for they would then be reduced to a helpleſs ſtate; they would have no houſe to inhabit, no grounds to ſupply them, no connexions to ſupport them, no maſter to protect them, and no laws to do them juſtice. With hopes diſappointed, means ſequeſtered, and want and miſery before their eyes, they would give themſelves up to bitter but unavailing complaints, might meet with rigour in

proportion to their ſufferings, and be glad to find that refuge in death which in life they had unwittingly forfeited.

It would be here natural to exclaim—Is there not humanity in the Weſt-Indies to prevent ſo melancholy a fate, ſo miſerable, ſo untimely a diſſolution? Humanity can only be meaſured by a poſſibility and a knowledge of ſuffering: there are thoſe in all countries who are able, and who would be willing, to relieve particular objects; but as relief is comparative, and as in large communities there are thouſands who periſh unviſited, as unknown, on account of the extent of numbers,—in the more confined intercourſe of ſociety there would of courſe be many who, by the ſame mode of argument, would ſuffer, not from the want, but the impracticability, of relief.

If emancipation ſhall take place, the merchant who has lent money to ſupport the colonies, upon the faith of the legiſlature

lature of Great-Britain, will ſuffer; the planter, whoſe capital will be wrenched from him, will be ruined; and thoſe thouſands of white people who depend upon both, in various callings and avocations of life, will have that life to begin again, and at an age too, perhaps, when they are become, from diſeaſe, and the decays of nature, incapable of labour; and whoſe hearts will bend with ſorrow to the grave, to think that their induſtry has been thus ungratefully rewarded, their dependence upon the mother country inſulted, and that they muſt at laſt fall martyrs to a cruel as an unavailing confidence, or muſt avoid the horrors of ſuch an end, if an equitable compenſation be not made for their loſſes and expences, by becoming at laſt their own executioners.

But thoſe who ſo warmly intereſt themſelves in the cauſe of the *negroes*, make uſe of another argument—Let *them* be free, but let the Europeans labour in the cultivation of the fields! But after un-

unconditional liberty ſhall have been given to the ſlaves, what perſonal protection are the white people to experience? for it cannot be ſuppoſed that thoſe who are actually born to freedom, are to be ſacrificed at the temple of a ſpeculative deity.

That the land in Jamaica can be cultivated by white people, is a ſuggeſtion that I know not how to reconcile to common ſenſe or reaſon; and ſeems to be one, but the moſt impracticable, of thoſe ſpeculations which have been broached upon the preſent ſubject. The moſt induſtrious even, and the moſt perſevering of thoſe who follow mechanical profeſſions in the iſland, and who muſt be conſequently expoſed to the heat of the ſun, the fatigue of the mountains, and the varieties of the ſeaſons, very ſoon become oppreſſed by the intemperance of the climate, and obſerve their ſpirits decline, their exertions fail, and an encreaſing languor prevail over their former habits of induſtry and toil.

Europeans

Europeans are no farther employed in the cultivation of the land than as gardeners or ploughmen; and of theſe deſcriptions if there was, in my time, *one* upon an average of twenty eſtates of the former, and of the latter one upon ten, it is as much credit as I can conſcientiouſly give to this claſs of labour, as founded upon my own experience.

If we ſhould be even inclined to ſacrifice fact to an hypotheſis, I muſt conſequently revert to my former argument: What is to be done with the negroes? In what ſituation are they to be hereafter placed? The Creole ſlaves will be exempted from that tax upon mortality, which obliges every individual to labour in his calling; they will live a life of idleneſs and danger in their own country; and they will look triumphantly down upon, and inſult the manual exertions of thoſe whom they formerly conſidered as their maſters; and whom they would be glad, after ſuch a reformation ſhall have taken place in con-

ſequence of freedom, to have again as guardians, protectors, and friends.

To ſuppoſe that Europeans could cultivate the land in the iſlands, or negroes that of England, would be to acknowledge that climate has not any effect upon bodily exertions, upon national diſtinctions, or upon endemial feelings.

But ſet all theſe objections aſide; how is Europe to furniſh numbers in any proportion to the wants of the colonies? How and where are they to be furniſhed with proviſions, clothing, and thoſe neceſſary comforts that ſhould be always at hand to reſtore the ſick, to ſupport the convaleſcent, and to ſuſtain the ſtrong and healthy?

Unuſed to the climate, and the fatigue and danger with which labour would be attended, they would be ſwept off in dreadful proportions before they could be brought to colonize; and unacquainted with the manage-

management, and of courſe unſkilful in the cultivation of the fields, their health with their ſpirits would be effectually worn down, and the feeble remnant would at laſt pine away in languor and diſeaſe; and would turn back their eyes with melancholy, regret, or deſpondency of heart, as the Africans are ſuppoſed to do, towards their native country, from which, not crimes, but a cruel policy, has driven them; and may poſſibly envy the ſituation of their unfortunate brethren at Botany Bay, a more eaſy ſoil and happy clime: for where the miſery of the mind is connected with the languor of the body, it may eaſily be imagined how very ſoon theſe enemies of human nature will lead to diſſolution.

If the colonies were to be attempted to be cultivated by white people, the whole population of Great-Britain would be unequal to the object, and would in the courſe of a century be melted down and become extinct: and the cauſes that would ſub-

ſubſtantiate this bold aſſertion, may be in ſome meaſure divined from the calculations that have been made upon partial emigrations, and where attention and plenty have not been equal to the aſſaults of ſickneſs and deſpair, the laſt of which has cut off more people in the Weſt-Indies than plagues or famine.

The cruelties that have been practiſed by different nations in the proſecution of the African trade, are of ſuch enormity as to ſhake with horror, and to melt with compaſſion, the boſom of the moſt unfeeling; but intereſt rides triumphant over ſufferings, and owns no monitor but wealth.

For theſe cruelties the planter is not reſponſible; the miſeries therefore which he occaſions, ſhould be explored; and the wanton power to inflict inhuman puniſhment, ſhould be, if not ſuppreſſed, at leaſt reſtrained: but ſurely, independently of benevolence, he cannot be ſo blind to his own advantage, as with his humanity to ſacrifice

ſacrifice his intereſt, to miſuſe what is to adminiſter to his comforts, and to deſtroy what is to ſubſtantiate his ends.

The negro is the moſt valuable title by which the planter holds his eſtate; he is by law conſidered as his real property: and will he injure himſelf, or ſuffer to be hurt by others, *that*, which is to contribute to his means; the preſervation of which will help to make him affluent, and the accumulated loſs of which muſt lead to ruin?

If neither abolition, nor emancipation ſhall take place, it is hoped that a full and efficient reformation *may*; and under this idea there cannot be a doubt but that the negroes may be made as contented and as happy, as their ideas of contentment and happineſs can poſſibly extend; and upon a ſubject upon which benevolence has ſo free a ſcope to exert its virtues, it becomes the duty of every one who either does poſſeſs, or would be ſuppoſed capable

capable of, feeling, to throw in his mite in augmentation of the general maſs, in the hope that thoſe ſtigmas of cruelty under which thoſe who live in the community of negro ſlaves have ſo long laboured, may be gradually and efficaciouſly removed, and that the ſenſibility which called for reformation may be amply requited by a knowledge of its ſalutary and ſucceſsful effects.

The ſympathetic feelings that firſt pointed to the relief of the ſlaves, were noble and humane; and although they were taken up under ideas not altogether warrantable from the actual and general experience of bodily ſufferings; yet, as far as they were meant to apply to mental comfort, will always ſtand as ſtriking features of the benevolence of the times, of the humanity of individuals, and of that diſpaſſionate and perſevering idea of independence, which is the ſymptom of a great mind; and will not fail, in the end, to hand down the promoters, the ſupporters, and thoſe who ſhall have

have ultimately triumphed in this reformation, to the kindneſs of the preſent age, and to the applauſe of poſterity.

It muſt depend upon time to ſee whether or no the promiſe of ſuch fruit ſhall be matured: the experiment ſhould be gradual, and ſhould advance through the medium of obſervation and experience, before we determine upon its perfection. If any additional enforcement can take place of comfort or relief to thoſe degraded people whoſe ſituations lay them under the commiſeration of public opinion, it will be one point gained in the calculation of future contingencies; and according to the diminution of their ſufferings, will a correſponding credit be given to thoſe whoſe original ideas, and perſevering ſpirit of humanity, ſhall ultimately give ſupport to weakneſs, and hardly make perceptible the bonds of ſlavery.

If ſome men profit by bondage, there are others to whom it has proved a curſe; and

and of thoſe white people who die in Jamaica, and whoſe deaths are attributed to the climate, there are many, I am convinced, who are brought to the grave by the diſappointment and affliction which are too often the certain conſequences of an improvident purchaſe of ſlaves.

This part of the ſubject very naturally, and, as it were, by inference, introduces an account of the negro-merchant; who is often treated with a rigour that he does not deſerve, and who has been too frequently arraigned for cruelties which it was not poſſible for him to licenſe or commit.

There is a great deal of difference between the man who enveigles, and him who ſells: the views of the firſt ſeem to center in the procurement of a cargo, and thoſe of the laſt upon its preſervation and ſale. The merchant who takes up a ſhip in Jamaica, contracts for it after the termination of the voyage, and is conſequently ignorant of thoſe cruelties by which the

the negroes were procured, and of thoſe diſcomforts and hardſhips which they are ſaid, with too much reaſon, to labour under. No tax of inhumanity therefore, upon this ſcore, can be laid upon him: on the contrary, as his intereſt is connected with his tenderneſs, *that* beomes an object of policy, to which thoſe who are not acquainted with the relative ſituations of the ſeller and the ſlave, would affix the appellation of feeling; and upon the cheerful appearance, and the bodily health of the latter, the firſt muſt depend for a briſk and a profitable ſale.

The good negroes of a favourite country, let the price be what it will, are in general very ſoon diſpoſed of; the more indifferent ones will not be purchaſed with much avidity; but the extent of credit, and reduction of terms, are temptations which thoſe in the Weſt-Indies who traffic in human fleſh can rarely withſtand: but thoſe unhappy ſpectres that are become objects of commiſeration from ſickneſs, neglect, and

and want, and who perhaps at their departure from their native country, and before they fell under the inhuman gripe of commerce, were vigorous and healthy—these unhappy creatures, I had almoſt ſaid theſe outcaſts of intereſt, are frequently reduced to ſuch a ſituation of bodily miſery and mental deſpair, that their appearance alone, independently of the reflections it occaſions, is ſufficient to ſhock the eye of human nature, and would excite compaſſion to wiſh them, not an extended exiſtence, but an early grave, in which they might bury at once themſelves and their misfortunes.

Many of theſe poor wretches, too weak for exertion, and reduced by hunger to the extremities of life, are ſeen lying about the ſtreets without clothing, without food, and without compaſſion; and it muſt ſurely be a ſlur upon our colonial laws, and a ſatire upon the humanity of individuals, if ſuch objects are left to periſh, unnoticed and unlamented.

Some

Some have not language to expreſs their wants, and ſome are too much exhauſted to ſigh out the tremors of complaint; but hold out, with a wiſtful and deſponding eye, a withered hand, in feeble token of their ſufferings; and implore, but too often implore in vain, with all the eloquence of ſilent ſorrow and patient reſignation, a drop of water, or a crumb of bread, to ſuſtain their declining bodies in the laſt ſtruggles of humanity, and to ward off for a moment the impending horrors of death.

This melancholy picture is by no means over-coloured; and the legiſlature ſhould certainly interfere in the correction of an abuſe ſo very obvious; of an abuſe ſo diſgraceful to the privileges of reaſon, and ſo diſhonourable to that religion, whoſe tenets are founded in mercy.

Of the rigorous dealing and perſecution of the negro-merchant, it is very common among all claſſes of people in Jamaica to complain; but I greatly fear that more is to

be attributed upon this head to the impunctuality of him who buys, than to the want of liberality of him who ſells.

When a man makes the purchaſe of a ſlave, he ſhould have the juſtice to reflect that he has been entruſted with the property of another; he ſhould likewiſe have the liberality to conſider, that the merchant muſt make good his payment at home, whatever diſappointments he may meet with from abroad: his credit therefore, if not his character, is at ſtake; and a failure of remittances of conſiderable extent and magnitude may ſubject him to preſent inconveniency at leaſt, if not involve him in future ruin.

The extenſion of twelve or eighteen months credit is a temptation to many to buy, who in fact ought not to purchaſe; and the conſequences that will, and that muſt generally attend impunctuality, are ſerious and deſtructive.

The

The concerns of a negro-merchant are ſo extenſive, that partiality would almoſt amount to injuſtice: if therefore the obligation be not diſcharged when due, the party is ſued, a judgement obtained, and, if a writ of *Venditioni exponas* be executed, the negro is ſold for one third perhaps of what he originally coſt; and what ſeems to be a particular hardſhip, the conſequence, whether politic or not, of the priority law, is the following practice: If the defendant be otherwiſe indebted, the property of the plaintiff will go towards the diſcharge of ſuch judgements as are previous to his; although juſtice would incline us to think, that the man who ſells, and is not paid, has the beſt right to a reſumption of his own.

If a perſon ſhall purchaſe twenty negroes, and they ſhall originally coſt him fifty pounds ſterling per head, it is ſtill a great chance but he loſe one before the time that the firſt payment ſhall come round: and as new negroes ought to be treated

with great tenderneſs at firſt, the produce of their labour will conſequently be trifling; while the expence of clothing, proviſions, tools, and a perſon to attend them, independently of the doctor's bill, will be very conſiderable. They may import with them the diſorders of Africa, or may contract the ſmall-pox in the Iſlands; by which means many may be ſwept off before they ſhall be ſeaſoned to the climate, others may become weakly and diſabled, and ſeveral of the remaining ſlaves may turn out runaways and rogues. Theſe particulars therefore conſidered, it may eaſily be imagined how very great the diminution of their value muſt be, after ſuch a liſt of contingencies.

I will even ſuppoſe that the purchaſer ſhall have been peculiarly fortunate in their ſeaſoning; but let him be ever ſo ſucceſsful in this reſpect, I do not think that he will be able, with the moſt unremitting attention, and with even a ſuperfluity of food, to preſerve and domeſticate, in three

three years, more than one out of four who ſhall turn out a really induſtrious and efficient ſlave.

If therefore at the end of three years he loſe, by a favourable calculation, five negroes out of twenty, he will be however obliged to pay for this laſt number, although he ſhall only have fifteen remaining; and, what is ſtill more mortifying, he muſt be conſcious that he purchaſed them in health and vigour, and is only now the maſter of a remnant, many of which are reduced by hunger, ſome grown worthleſs, and do not altogether earn perhaps the intereſt (6 per cent.) of his debt; although he ſhall contrive, by the ſubtleties and conſequent delays of the law, to ſtave off, as long as poſſible, the rigorous execution of the principal.

Of thoſe who eſtabliſh an independency by the purchaſe of negroes, the calculation will not, I believe, amount, if all circumſtances be conſidered, to one in five; and I do

firmly believe, that out of the aſtoniſhing numbers of judgements that are annually obtained in Jamaica on account of impunctuality of payment, at leaſt ſix out of ſeven are ſubſtantiated from a haſty and improvident purchaſe of ſlaves: and hence the ruinous expences of the law, independently of the miſeries that a ſtate of altercation engenders, muſt be added to the vexatious liſt of the adventurers misfortunes.

I know not any meaſure that could ſo effectually tend to the relief of the indebted planter, give ſo much quiet to his mind, and ſunſhine to his views, as a ſuppreſſion, for a few years, of the introduction of African ſlaves; for if they be to be ſold, let the terms be what they may, provided only that credit and time be given, there will be always found imprudent and ambitious men to purchaſe: and if the owners of the ſoil cannot make ſuch acquired poſſeſſions anſwer, how are *thoſe* to ſucceed who have not land, and are conſequently without

without proviſions, excepting ſuch as they will be obliged to procure at an enormous expence in the country, and the reſources of which are never ſure?

In the hands of jobbers even, whoſe means depend upon their health and preſervation, it is amazing what numbers of negroes die, before the former can raiſe a ſufficient gang to procure them any profit by a regular and ſyſtematic train of induſtry; and as many of theſe adventurers are practitioners of phyſic, there ſeems to be ſome reaſon to conclude that they ought to be more ſucceſsful than others; but I was not able to learn, during my reſidence in the Iſland, that ſuch was abſolutely the caſe.

The poſſeſſors of the old eſtabliſhed properties in Jamaica, appear to me to be too much alarmed at the pending idea of an abolition of the ſlave-trade; an inhibition that would materially, in ſome inſtances, ſerve the planter of moderate expectations

and hopes, but which would certainly, on the other hand, help to damp the man of enterpriſe, conſiderably diminiſh the public revenue, and not only put a ſtop to an increaſe of cultivation in the Iſland, but likewiſe reduce to barrenneſs and deſerts a great portion of that land which is now under the cultivation of canes: it would occaſion additional labour to fall upon thoſe ſlaves who are now in the colonies, and which it would be difficult for the moſt benevolent inſtitutions, and the moſt ſalutary reformations, ever to remove.

How far the African negroes may be affected by the humane interference of the Britiſh legiſlature in their particular favour, I am not competent to ſpeak: but, if abolition ſhall take place in conſequence of the abuſes and the enormities with which the traffic of ſlaves is attended; and if emancipation ſhall be renounced as a viſionary ſcheme, deſtructive to thoſe who were meant to benefit from it, dangerous to the lives of the white people who are now ſettled

ſettled in the colonies, and ruinous to public and private property; and if, in conſequenee of its impracticability, it ſhall be relinquiſhed; it will then be prudent to blend philanthropy with intereſt, as it will be the triumph of humanity to looſen thoſe bonds which have been too cloſely tied, and which have in conſequence too often bruiſed.

Inſtitutions may certainly be made in the colonies, to render the negroes as contented and happy as the peaſantry are found to be in Europe; nor do I think that ſuch a reformation would be attended with much delay or trouble: but before they can feel the benefits of a wiſe and equal legiſlation, ſome alteration muſt be made in the manners and purſuits of thoſe by whom they are at preſent governed; and this poſition naturally brings me to a deſcription of the inhabitants of the country.

In European communities there is a chain of ſubordination, that deſcends from link to link, which, while it preſerves the ſtrength

of

of the whole, gives eaſe and motion to ſome particular parts; and which, without conſtraint, enſures obedience: whereas, the levelling principle that obtains among the white people in Jamaica, entrenches upon the duties of ſociety, and annihilates the bonds of power, and the good effects of ſubordination. On the other hand, as ſlaves are thrown at a diſtance from the ideas of equality, the weight of command does not deſcend by perceptible degrees, but falls at once to cruſh the timid, and to confound the bold; although the inflicter of puniſhment may not perhaps be poſſeſſed of more reaſon, or more ſenſe, than the unhappy wretch who ſuffers, and who, as he cannot reſiſt, is obliged to ſuccomb.

It is generally contended, that negroes have not the ſame ideas that thoſe have by whom they are governed. In this they are happy, not having the ſame wiſhes to form, the ſame wants to gratify, and being contented with the poſſeſſion of thoſe goods which fall in their way, without encountering

tering thoſe evils with which their ſearch would be attended.

They know not the deſperate alternative of cruſhing a friend, to ſtand erect upon his depreſſion, and to riſe into conſequence from his ruin. They dream not, when awake, of riches; and not knowing the dangers of wealth, they feel, without perceiving it, the comforts of privation.

A rich man muſt depend upon others for comfort; a poor man, upon himſelf: the former lives for multitudes; the latter, for a community that is either perſonal, or circumſcribed.

The man of opulence has cauſe of diſappointment, vexation, and ingratitude, in every thing around him: he is teazed by his ſervants; he is mortified by his dependents; and is perhaps neglected in the hour of trial, and abandoned in that of want, in proportion to the favours which, in proſperity, he had the inclination and

the

the power to confer. Of conſequences thus deduced, of miſeries thus felt, of mortifications thus indured, the negroes are, from ſituation as well as feeling, exempted; and their fears at leaſt are tranſitory, although their enjoyments are far from being permanent: the firſt might be removed, and the laſt in ſome meaſure ſubſtantiated.

If they be but one degree removed from vegetable exiſtence, as it is weakly, and I had almoſt ſaid, as it has been impiouſly ſuppoſed, they are not oppreſſed by the weight, nor do they labour under the effects, of cogitation; for the ideas of miſery are in a tenfold proportion to thoſe of happineſs: and, as they are not made wretched by the pangs of an upbraiding conſcience, they ſeem to be ſatisfied with thoſe neceſſaries that ſupport exiſtence. But I muſt however confeſs, that I never found any negroes, either Creole or African, who were gifted with the powers of diſtinguiſhing morally, and not from example, the difference between a good and an evil action;

action; or who could reaſon upon the neceſſity of dependence here, or draw any feaſible comfort from their liberty hereafter. As example therefore is the prominent feature of human government, and as they will conſequently follow that which they ſee before them, how regular ſhould be the conduct, and how ſteady the government, of thoſe whom they are taught to look up to for imitation, and from whom they are to receive the doctrine of obedience!

I abſolutely deny that they are incapable of mental inſtruction, and ſcientific improvement: on the contrary, I think the negroes apt, even thoſe imported from Africa, and labouring under an ignorance of the manners and the language of the country, in the acquirement and perfection of the different trades, and the mechanical proceſſes to which they are devoted; and which, I do inſiſt, they learn with as much facility and perſeverance as the white people do in Europe.

When

When we conſider under whom the generality of them are educated, if the negative routines of thought may be called an education, we ſhall be inclined to give them credit for what they know, when they have ſuch melancholy proſpects of being taught: and hence a deſcription of the condition to which they are ſubject, and of thoſe people by whom it is impreſſed, will more fully lead to the point I aim at, and help to eſtabliſh thoſe as corollaries, which might otherwiſe be conſidered as ſpeculation.

A great number of the eſtates in Jamaica are in the hands of mortgagees in poſſeſſion; and theſe are commonly found to be a deſcription of people who call themſelves Weſt-India merchants. I am conſcious that I now ſtand upon ſlippery ground, that the leaſt falſe ſtep will help to ſink me, and that an abſolute fall will reduce me to a ſituation to riſe perhaps no more; but, as I profeſs to ſpeak from facts, I will commend

commend where I can, and blame where I ought.

The merchant lends money to the planter, provides his Engliſh ſtores and Iriſh proviſions, diſpoſes of his ſugar and rum upon commiſſion, and directs the management, and receives the profit, of any ſhipping with which he may be imprudently engaged: I ſay, imprudently, becauſe, in an adventure of this kind, the maſter of the ſhip, if he be part owner, and the huſband, are thoſe only who, in time of peace, can make any intereſt of their money.

The merchant's commiſſion is ½ per cent. upon inſurances, 2 ½ per cent. upon all the produce which is addreſſed to his houſe for ſale, and ½ per cent. upon what he pays; or, in other words, 2 ½ per cent. upon ſales and invoices, and ½ per cent. upon receipts and payments. He charges intereſt at £.5 per cent. for what he advances: and it is the cuſtom to carry the intereſt to the principal every

every year, and thus make it an augmenting ſum.

Thoſe of opulence and punctuality, who can afford to pay ready money for every thing they buy, are accuſtomed to deduct 5 per cent. in the article of ſtores; but among thoſe who move in a more dependent ſphere no ſuch allowance is made.

The Iriſh merchant makes a charge of 2 ½ per cent. for the exportation of his own goods; a practice that is ſomewhat ſingular, and which does not ſeem to be founded upon the common and equitable principles of commerce: and, what is ſtill more extraordinary, the Engliſh merchant does the ſame.

A planter who is indebted to his merchant, labours under many pecuniary mortifications and diſappointments; and, ſhould the latter be diſtreſſed by the magnitude of the ſum advanced, or by a mode of living ſuperior to his means and ſituation in life, he muſt have recourſe to the pecuniary aid

aid of others, the conſequence of which has frequently been (if his broker ſhall happen to be the party to whom he has been obliged), that the ſugars which he has had orders to inſure, are ſold to diſadvantage before their arrival, or the ſamples, when purchaſed, are averaged at a price very far below their real value.

If the planter ſhall have occaſioned the diſtreſs of the merchant, and ſhall have driven him to the neceſſity of ſupporting at all events his tottering credit, he muſt, as he ought in juſtice, to ſtand to the conſequence; and if his property ſhall, on this account, be ſold to leſs advantage, his connexion with the latter is ſuch, that, however he may complain, he knows not how to find redreſs.

If a perſon happen to be connected with a man of reſpectability and credit, it is notorious that he obtains a much larger price for his produce than he would receive

from one of a different character; and if he be even engaged with a needy houſe, and to that houſe is not indebted, he will ſtill find a more favourable return for his conſignments than if he were encumbered.

Where merchants have many correſpondents, it has been too often a practice, I am told, to ſhow ſamples of ſugar from different eſtates, and then to ſtrike a general average between the good and bad; a practice that is not founded upon juſtice, whatever excuſe it may have in expediency, or the ſaving of delay and trouble: for ſuppoſe the merchant ſhould be himſelf poſſeſſed of a ſugar-plantation, and the produce of it were indifferent, compared to that which he has upon ſale from different properties—ſuppoſe this were the caſe, and he could ſo far forget honour in intereſt, as to average his bad with what is better, what ſuſpicion would it not occaſion in his correſpondents!

It

It is certainly more to the advantage of the planter to borrow money from any hand, even although he were to allow for it at the rate of 6 per cent. than to take it from his merchant at 5, provided he be in conſequence tied up to conſign to him his future produce: for when once the former becomes indebted to the latter in ſuch a ſum as he would find it difficult to raiſe at a ſhort warning upon a Weſt-India ſecurity, from that moment he becomes dependent, and perhaps for life. He gives perhaps a pledge that is worth £20,000, to cover a debt of £ 5,000; a judgement is obtained, to ſecure the priority of all he has; he is ejected from his eſtate; it falls into the hands of the mortgagee in poſſeſſion; the crops decreaſe, the value of the property ſinks, and the whole of it is perhaps ſold at laſt to pay off the encumbrance, and the creditor purchaſes for £ 5,000 what was abſolutely worth at leaſt double the ſum: and this is a practice, and a fact too well eſtabliſhed to admit of refutation.

I never knew a property fall under the management of mortgagees in poſſeſſion, even where the ſum was trifling, and the property was large, that was ever redeemed: and I have the experience of nearly thirteen years to enable me to ſubſtantiate this bold aſſertion. I have, on the contrary, heard of eſtates that have been indebted to the amount of their value, that have, in nearly the ſame ſpace of time, not only greatly reduced, but entirely expunged, every encumbrance upon them.

It is cuſtomary with the liberal creditor to ſuffer the indebted planter to reſide upon his mortgaged premiſes, to ſuperintend the white people, and to direct the cultivation of the land; to diſpoſe of his rum to diſcharge the contingencies of the country, to recommend captains of ſhips to convey his ſtores to the iſland, and to have the preference of freight to England, and to be indulged with ſuch articles and conveniences as the plantation affords; to have the liberty to reſide upon it, and likewiſe

to

to ſhare the ſame emoluments that an attorney would have; and under ſuch a compact the planter may not have much to apprehend, nor the merchant much to fear, as confidence is the beſt connective band of intereſt; whereas diſſenſion and diſtruſt, while they ſour the mind, will ultimately conduct to ruin.

To be, on the other hand, forbidden the leaſt interference whatever with his concerns, to be proceeded againſt to the utmoſt remnant of his means, to be deprived of common ſubſiſtence; and, to encreaſe his mortification, to behold all at once a man become his maſter, who but a few years before was contented to be his ſervant; all theſe are bitter circumſtances which the planter too often ſuffers, and which it is certainly heart-breaking to endure.

The rapacious and the unfeeling merchant is not always ſo ſcrupulous about

the character of the agent he employs, as he is about his obedience. Of his integrity perhaps he does not require a proof, and is equally indifferent whether he has been accuſtomed to the tiller, or is at all acquainted with the nature of the land. If he but follow his inſtructions, and will once condeſcend to ſecond his views upon the property of which he has the direction, he ſeems to care very little whether the proprietor periſh for want, or languiſh in a priſon; and it is a reproach to the practice of thus paſſing property from one hand to the other, to ſee the comfort and affluence with which ſome attornies to mortgagees live, while at the ſame time the proprietor of the eſtate is refuſed a dwelling upon it, and is ſtruggling under the accumulated miſeries of contempt and want.

Some attornies are reſident at the oppoſite parts of the iſland to thoſe in which the properties for which they are engaged

are placed; ſome are merchants, ſome are doctors, ſome are lawyers, and ſome have even been indented ſervants.

The relative ſituations of merchant and planter naturally make them dependent upon one another; and if the latter ſhall have been haraſſed, diſtreſſed, and ruined by the rapacity of the former, yet has the laſt been, in many inſtances, ſaved by the friendſhip, and made independent and happy by the credit of the firſt.

Among thoſe deſcriptions of people I well know that complaints and crimination are too often exchanged for confidence and fellow-feeling; and *that* property can never flouriſh, when *one* attempts to injure what it is the intereſt of the *other* to ſave.

One inconvenience the merchant certainly labours under; and as it is a pecuniary inconvenience, it comes home to his ſituation,

tion, and cannot fail to intereſt his feelings.

He hazards a portion of his capital, if he have any; or he pledges the credit of his name, if it can raiſe money, upon a foreign adventure, upon a country and ſoil, of the nature and quality of which he is entirely ignorant: he depends upon the ſkill and upon the conduct of the planter for the preſervation of his advance, for the returns of intereſt, and as a kind of compenſation for the conſignment of his goods; he furniſhes what is neceſſary for the ſupport of the plantation, or what he may more immediately require for his domeſtic uſes: their connexion therefore, conſidered in this point of view, appears to be tight, and their intereſts and mutual dependencies ſo intimately blended together, that the leaſt diſcordance would unhinge the machine, and clog at leaſt, if not for ever break, the ſprings of action; and againſt ſuch a diſunion, it ſhould be the wiſh of both to guard.

If

If the merchant, in conſequence of impunctuality, miſmanagement, or vicious habits, ſhould think it neceſſary to redeem his pledge (but misfortunes, I ſhould hope, the liberal mind would compaſſionate, and the failure of engagements, if impoſſible for the planter to fulfil them, excuſe)—if, I ſay, he find it of conſequence to call in his money, he muſt appoint an agent abroad, upon whom he muſt depend for juſtice; or who, on the contrary, he may tax, as is ſometimes the caſe, with either inattention, or an unwillingneſs to perſecute his friend: but ſo ſoon as he becomes (in conſequence of having found a perſon of leſs ſcruple and delicacy of conduct) in poſſeſſion of the mortgaged properties, he will ſoon be able to bribe the ſervant to betray the maſter, the dependent to ſacrifice his benefactor, and to ſecond him perhaps in all his ſchemes of inhumanity and inſult.

Among thoſe who profeſſionally undertake the direction of Jamaica eſtates, and conduct

conduct them for their conſtituents at home, there are people, as before obſerved, of various deſcriptions, from the ignorant to the intelligent, and from the reſponſible to the dependent. Some act from principle, and ſome from intereſt; ſome do good, and ſome do miſchief: and thoſe properties are, I think, in general the beſt managed, upon which the attornies do not reſide; but who, acknowledging their ignorance of the cultivation of the ſoil, and of the various proceſſes of ſugar-making, have the modeſty and ſenſe to depend upon the ſcientific and the experienced, without any other interference perhaps than that of making them reſponſible for their conduct, and of diſcouraging and diſcarding the worthleſs, and of rewarding and confiding in the meritorious.

The attorney draws 6 per cent. upon the produce of the plantation; makes an allowance, according to its extent and revenues, to a perſon to keep the books of the property, and to do in his abſence ſuch buſineſs

buſineſs as the overſeer, from a different line of occupation, is either incompetent to, or has not leiſure to ſuperintend. He appoints the overſeer, and affixes his ſalary according to his pretenſions and his ſkill; and among this claſs of people I have ſeen and been perſonally acquainted with ſome, that are an honour to their profeſſion, and who would make as reſponſible agents as thoſe by whom they have been, in a ſubordinate capacity, employed.

The attorney who manages for the proprietor in England, derives his emoluments from the produce of the property, and charges 6 per cent. for every thing he makes, and every thing he ſells; and if he be not ſcrupulous in his truſt, he may likewiſe draw many other advantages from his ſituation, which ſome have not ſcrupled to take. He may order the eſtates to ſupply him with corn, may direct their carts to carry it; may be from thence ſupplied with mules for his ſervants, and with proviſions and delicacies for himſelf; and may likewiſe

likewiſe order the attendance of any negroes he may prefer, to wait upon him in menial capacities: and all this he may do, and all this is often done, without any ceremony or compenſation.

If he have extenſive concerns, he is followed about the country with a retinue of carriages, of ſervants, and of horſes, which ſhake the ground as they thunder along; and when he arrives upon the plantation, the command goes forth, to catch and kill; the table is covered with profuſion, and few are ſuffered to go empty, I had almoſt ſaid ſober, away.

There is not a profeſſion in the country ſo much ſought after as this; and if it be not the moſt honourable, it is certainly the moſt profitable, and that in which is often diſplayed the greateſt mediocrity of talents: for a ſituation that individually does not either require thought, or inſiſt upon action, may be equally exerciſed by the vacant and inactive. The only things required

required, are confidence and protection from home, an hoſpitable way of life in the iſland, a coſtly table, a full cellar, and good attendance; and if you have beſides an eaſy carriage, and an ambling horſe, "all "the reſt ſhall be added unto you."

The buſineſs of an attorney, when reſiding upon the plantation, is to attend the overſeer in a circuitous viſit of the cane fields, and to obtain from him a calculation of what they may produce; and as his emoluments ariſe from the magnitude of the crops, his intereſt will point out the means of making them productive; and hence the exorbitant expence of hired labour will be added, to ſwell the liſt of payments under which the planter already labours, and for which, in ſeaſons of ſtorms and famine, he may find it very difficult, if not impoſſible, to provide: the attorney having the means of payment in his own hands, may ſay "that charity begins at "home," and provides for his own wants before he conſiders thoſe of his employer.

He

He makes it a point to be upon good terms with the captains of ſhips, and all thoſe in ſhort who have an opportunity to report favourably of him to his conſtituents in England; and according to the extent of his concerns, will be his conſequence, and the reſpect that will be ſhown to him in the country.

Of this deſcription of perſons there are many who hold the firſt places in the community, and who are independent legiſlators, uſeful magiſtrates, and men of property; and who are beſides attentive and juſt to the intereſt of their employers, and reſpectable both in public and private life: but yet I muſt ſtill ſay, that I do not think even the beſt of them are ſo ſucceſsful in the management of a property which they conduct under a mortgagee in poſſeſſion, as when they hold the direction under the appointment, and the confidence, of the planter alone; and I muſt ſtill obſerve, that the latter will be in general found to be the beſt ſteward of his own

own affairs, as his own intereſt would be ſo much blended with his conduct; and his negroes would more cheerfully obey his orders than attend to thoſe of ſtrangers; and they will go forward with warmer hopes of a redreſs of their complaints, to him who is ſo much a party in their content and welfare, than they would to one who has not the ſame motives to direct him.

When a merchant and a planter ſhall have found it neceſſary to enter into terms for their mutual government and ſafety, I think it always bad policy, and ruinous to both, when the latter is deprived of the poſſeſſion and management of his eſtate. The former might appoint an attorney to ſee his rights aſcertained, and that juſtice be in the firſt inſtance done to his claims reſpecting the conſignments, the payment of contingencies, and for whatever ſums he is, from the nature of the connexion, become reſponſible: but the actual poſſeſſion and ſuperintendence ſhould ſtill continue in

in the proprietor of the ſoil; for there is hardly a ſituation more deplorable than one of this laſt deſcription, when he is obliged to turn out of his own houſe, without any proviſion being made for his wants, to make room for a man who was perhaps only the day before his ſervant and dependent.

If the creditor could only know the heart-felt miſeries, and the neglect and inſult which the planter ſuſtains, when, in conſequence of debts accumulated by the dreadful viſitations that have deſcended from the hand of God, or the unfeeling rapacity and inhumanity of man;—if the rigorous could only feel what he endures at being ejected from his home, deprived of his attendants, and ſtruggling under diſeaſe, and without a common ſubſiſtence to procure the means of life, he would ſtartle at the power which the law, or an unguarded confidence, has given him; and would ultimately find, that his views of intereſt

or

or importance would hardly compenſate the reproach with which his rigour would be attended.

I would recommend it to the planter, to conſider how very ſerious a thing it is, to become indebted to a merchant of an illiberal and parſimonious turn of mind; and to be particularly cautious how he entruſts him with a ſecurity that is of great magnitude compared to a ſmall advance. That he ſhould be juſt and punctual, his intereſt will point out the neceſſity, as well as the advantage: but it is much better to ſuffer at once a pecuniary humiliation and diſtreſs, than to behold a weight in continual pendence above him, when he has every reaſon to think that it will, ſome time or other, deſcend and cruſh him.

The merchant wants no caution to remind him of his intereſt: if he meet with diſappointment, he has recourſe to his ſecurity at laſt; and by advancing money upon

pledges of land in Jamaica, I have never heard that one has ultimately been a loſer: but the inſtances of ruin to the planter under ſuch bonds have been too frequent to require proof.

It will not, I hope, be imagined that I wiſh to throw the moſt diſtant reflections upon merchants of credit and honour: they are beyond my reach, and would look down with contempt upon him who could have the injuſtice to revile them. My remarks and ſtrictures therefore will only apply to thoſe of a different caſt; and to them, if any ſuch there be, I will not even condeſcend to make an apology.

When the proprietor takes upon himſelf the management of his own plantation, there are many little circumſtances which he attends to as objects of amuſement, which an attorney might poſſibly conſider as irkſome and diſguſting; and who thinks, and perhaps wiſely, that he very fully diſcharges his duty if he ſuperintend the groſs

of

of affairs, without entering into thoſe minutiæ which, being trifles, are better neglected.

The planter is in general too fond of trying experiments; and his private caprice cannot fail to injure his public views. If a man be clear of debt, and is contented with what he has, the community ought to think itſelf obliged to every individual who may make them. He is the only perſon who can be injured by the miſcarriage; and by his failure of ſucceſs no creditor is hurt: but in thoſe of a contrary deſcription, the ſtrait road of management will more certainly conduct to eaſe or wealth.

Every planter entertains a good opinion of his own management; and being ſanguine in his expectations, he is of conſequence very frequently deceived. He is tempted, in proportion to his expectations, to purchaſe negroes and ſtock; and hence increaſes his debts, which were before

oppreſſive: whereas, if he would be ſatisfied with what the ſtrength and condition of his eſtate would give him, without clogging its wheels with unneceſſary expence, he might be enabled to wipe off annually ſome portion of his encumbrances; and when the merchant finds that his correſpondent provides with punctuality for the intereſt, and reduces, from year to year, however little, the principal ſum, his confidence will probably increaſe, and he may be diſpoſed to make allowances for ſeaſons of hurricanes and droughts.

As the planter ſeems to be the ſpring of action in the Weſt-Indies, his manners have an effect upon thoſe of the country. Every one pretends to be, more or leſs, a man of buſineſs; and trifles appear of conſequence to thoſe who are not habituated to the practice of regular and ſyſtematic occupation.

For the intereſted buſtles of life, for that induſtry that begets wealth, and that circumſpection

cumſpection that knows how to keep it, there is not a character in the world leſs adapted than a Weſt-Indian. Unſteady in thought, and deſultory in action, he knows not how to combine his ideas for uſe, nor to direct their exertion to a given point. His warmth of temper is not followed by a coolneſs of judgement; but then I have ſeldom known the heat of paſſion conduct him to revenge. Too indolent for the exertions of the mind, his body ſeems to partake of its languor; and though his ſpirits will ſometimes lead him to the higheſt flights of extravagance, yet will reflection often ſink him to the loweſt deſpair. His diſpoſition is, in ſome inſtances, not unlike that of a Frenchman, who is as eaſily elevated, as ſoon depreſſed. He is ſeldom a miſer, and more often a ſpendthrift than barely generous; and when he is impunctual, I ſhould rather attribute it in many inſtances to a want of arrangement, and a foreſight of contingencies, than to the failure of an honeſt principle.

It is ſomewhat ſingular, that there is hardly an inſtance of a Creole who has excelled in the liberal profeſſions, or in works of genius; and for this it would be difficult to account, were it not in ſome manner apparent from their natural indolence, and averſion to one ſteady and unremitting purſuit. Of one quality they are certainly poſſeſſed, and that is hoſpitality; and which may, in ſome meaſure, cover their other failings: nor do I think that their generoſity is often the handmaid of oſtentation.

Their lives are certainly full of vexation and trouble: their means depending upon the favour of the climate, and the preſervation of a capital ſo liable to incidents and mortality, make them look for danger when remote, and anticipate misfortunes that may not happen. They live well while they have the means; and think, perhaps too much, upon the entertainment that they are to give their friends; and this anxiety of making welcome, and of crowding their table with profuſion, and of drinking, very frequently,

frequently, to exceſs, is a cuſtom that prevails too much among all claſſes of people in the country.

The women in Jamaica ſuperintend the domeſtic affairs, and provide for the neceſſaries and comforts of the table. Their occupations are always unpleaſant, and they too often meet with cauſes of diſguſt. In that Iſland they ſuffer much, ſubmit to much, and lead a life of toil and miſery, which the moſt commendable patience, and the moſt amiable reſignation, cannot brook, though doomed to bear.

The overſeer has many advantages of comfort, which his employer cannot ſhare. He has few wiſhes, and few cares: his proviſions are found him, and thoſe he enjoys without expence or trouble. His profeſſion does not ſubject him to labour, nor his ſituation make him reſponſible: he may be diſcharged indeed for mal-practices, but cannot be puniſhed for neglect, excepting

in caſes of notoriety which call aloud for public example. He directs the management of the property, if he have a ſenſible driver and obedient negroes, with eaſe to himſelf; and his daily orders recur, and are executed, without inveſtigation, and without puniſhment. If the groſs of buſineſs be well attended to, he is not difficult about trifles. He takes his daily rides into the cane-pieces, to ſee that the work goes on with regularity and diſpatch; and when he is abſent, the book-keeper attends; but the driver is the perſon whom he truſts. In crop-time he does not continue much in the field, but gives his particular attention to the works, and takes care that the negroes are not idle, and that they do not waſte, or ſteal, the produce. Theſe remarks apply to a perſon of character and diligence; nor have I had any perſonal connexion with any people of this rank, whoſe honeſty I could impeach, or whoſe induſtry upbraid.

Upon

Upon ſome plantations there are many white people engaged; and the full eſtabliſhment will be found to conſiſt of the overſeer, with a ſalary from £.100 ſterling, to two, three, or more; a diſtiller, with £.40; two book-keepers, with £.30 or £.20; a maſon, a carpenter, a blackſmith, and perhaps a cooper and a wheelwright, at different rates, from indented ſervants at £.50 a year, to £.100, or more. For theſe the overſeer provides; and theſe he directs and ſuperintends in their different avocations. Upon ſome properties there is beſides a doctor, upon a fixed ſalary; but otherwiſe he is allowed 5s. currency per head for every negro, and finds the medicines himſelf.

The above is a large eſtabliſhment; and the average of eſtates in the Iſland are contented with an overſeer at £.100 a year, and one, or at moſt two book-keepers: but every white man will ſtand the property in the full amount of his ſalary beſides.

Where

Where there are many ſervants, there will be but little work; and that which is expected to be done by many, will be frequently at laſt left undone by one. Beſides, the lower claſſes of white people in Jamaica are unworthy of confidence and power: they are idle, drunken, worthleſs, and immoral; and it is chiefly owing to the infamy of *their* example, that the negroes become idle, and turn out thieves and villains. Until therefore a reformation can be made in the manners of thoſe with whom the ſlaves are ſo much connected, it will be impoſſible to enact any ſalutary and efficient inſtitutions for their better government, for the decency of their conduct, the improvement of their minds, or the enforcing the comfortable or the moral duties of obedience.

It was my intention to have been more minute in my deſcription of the manners, occupations, and cuſtoms of the negroes in Jamaica; but as the fate of the

the colonies ſeems to be now involved in the popular queſtion of an abolition of the ſlave-trade, I ſhall defer my obſervations upon this ſubject, until the frenzy of the moment ſhall be abated, and the voice of reaſon ſhall allay that tempeſt, which a meaſure ſo replete with danger cannot fail to excite. I ſhall therefore be at preſent contented to notice ſuch particulars as may help to explain their comforts; and ſhall leave their ſufferings to be inſiſted upon by thoſe who have had more occaſion than myſelf to pity their misfortunes.

I ſhall be, I hope, excuſed if I dwell a little upon the *ſeeming* miſery of their ſituations, and then contraſt the ſubjection of their lives with the needy *independency* of the poor of England.

The idea of ſlavery, abſtractedly conſidered, appears to an Engliſhman both offenſive and inſupportable; and he blindly attaches

attaches a horror to the word, without ſtrictly ſcanning its neceſſity or meaning.

The negroes are ſlaves by nature; and cuſtom and neceſſity oblige them to bear with patience and reſignation what by force or will they cannot obtain. They have no idea of the charms of liberty; nor have they an education to give them a knowledge of its meaning, or any purſuits of ambition to make them deſire it: but it may be ſaid, that every human creature has the ſame original right to the kind diſpoſitions and benevolent intentions of our Creator: it would however fill the world with miſery and confuſion, had every one the indiſcriminate power to enjoy them. All that a Weſt-Indian can then do, in a ſituation in which fortune has placed him to be in authority over others of a different complexion, but perhaps of the ſame feelings with himſelf, is, to make humanity and juſtice the rules of his general conduct; for it is certainly better, and more conſonant

ſonant to the profeſſions of our religion, to relax on the ſide of mercy, than to be rigid on that of power.

The negroes are clothed and fed at the expence of the maſter. If they work well, and cheerfully, they meet with indulgence; if ſick, they are attended with care, and relieved with humanity; as much, perhaps, from a principle of policy, as from a motive of commiſeration. If they obey the orders of the overſeer, they ſeldom fail of proper encouragement: if they be worthleſs they muſt expect correction; and the mode of puniſhment in Jamaica is by no means ſo rigorous as that of the naval and military diſcipline of England. The common huſbandmen, and I had almoſt ſaid the mechanics, in this laſt country, undergo greater hardſhips, and bend under more afflictions, than the generality of ſlaves in the former, whoſe conditions are much miſrepreſented by the advocates for humanity in Europe. The indolent only, and

and the ill-diſpoſed, encounter puniſhments; but this is a fate that attends people of this deſcription in every country.

Let us now conſider the ſituation of a needy labourer in England: let us ſuppoſe him incapable of exertion, from the infirmity of years, or from any conſtitutional defect of mind or body. Let us ſuppoſe him to be ſurrounded by a young, and conſequently, an helpleſs family; with a wife ſitting by him, in all the bitterneſs of ſoul lamenting the cauſe that has deprived him of labour, and his family of the means of bread. To heighten the ſhadows of the picture, let us add to this afflicted group an aged parent, who is watching the dying embers by the chimney ſide, and joining his ſighs and tears to the general misfortune. Let us paint, at a diſtance, by way of back-ground, the figure of an inhuman landlord, demanding from wretchedneſs and want what he cannot always obtain from happineſs and wealth;

for

for how can ſuch a family diſcharge a rent, and that perhaps an exorbitant one, when the common means of ſubſiſtence are wanting, and when induſtry itſelf muſt prove ineffectual?

The manners of the negroes, and the general appearance of the better kind of the black and mulatto ſlaves, are by no means rude and vulgar: in ſome indeed, there is a decency, a propriety of behaviour obſerved, that would ſhame many of the lower claſſes of the white women in Jamaica, upon the minutiæ of whoſe lives, and the caſt of whoſe employment, I have been, from motives of delicacy, ſilent: nor would I alarm the feelings of the more reſpectable, by enumerating purſuits which neceſſity impoſes; but which, I truſt, are not always ſanctioned by the willing propenſities of the heart.

When the negroes aſſemble at Chriſtmas, or upon any extraordinary occaſion, they

they equip themſelves with a certain degree of elegance. They are particularly fond of beads, coral, glaſs, and chains, and with which they adorn their necks and wriſts: they array themſelves in the fineſt linen, in the purchaſe of which they betray a determined extravagance, which many people may think not at all compatible with their ſituations; but if the reſources of a good negro were really aſcertained, and the few wants of a bad one known, the condition of the firſt, and the little care of the laſt, would remove the ſlur that is caſt upon humanity, and the tax that is laid upon juſtice.

The women take a pride in the number of their coats, and are not contented with any but what are made from the beſt materials, of which likewiſe their hats and handkerchiefs are commonly compoſed; and it muſt be acknowledged, that their taſte in dreſs is in perfect correſpondence to their ſituation and colour.

They

They are extremely fond of muſic and dancing; they have good ears, and preſerve the moſt perfect tune and time. Their muſical inſtruments indeed (the Caramantee flutes and the bender excepted, of which I have before ſpoken (with an omiſſion however of a ſlender ſtick which the player of the laſt-mentioned inſtrument preſſes to the ſtring a little below his mouth, to graduate the vibration), their muſical inſtruments, if ſuch they may be called, conſiſt of a bonjour, originally taken, perhaps, from a French word, as many have found their way by corruption among the negroes; a kind of Spaniſh guitar; a cotter, upon which they beat with ſticks; a gomba, which they ſtrike with their hands; a drum; a box filled with pebbles, which they ſhake with their wriſts; and, to cloſe the account, the jaw-bone of an animal, from which is produced a harſh and diſagreeable ſound: and it may eaſily be imagined, when theſe all together join in chorus, and are accompanied by a number of voices, what kind of muſic muſt aſſail, and fill the ear.

Their ſtyle of dancing is by no means ungraceful; and the different groups in which they aſſemble themſelves upon theſe occaſions, would make very pictureſque ſubjects for a painter. They generally meet before their houſes, and ſometimes in the paſtures under the ſhade of trees, where, if allowed, they will continue their favourite diverſions from night to morning.

Their principal feſtivals are at their burials, upon which occaſions they call forth all their magnificence, and diſplay all their taſte; and the expence with which the funerals of the better ſort of negroes upon a plantation are attended, very often exceed the bounds of credibility; and of this poſition many inſtances might be given. Their bodies lie in ſtate; an aſſemblage of ſlaves from the neighbourhood appears: the body is ornamented with linen and other apparel, which has been previouſly purchaſed, as is often the cuſtom, for this ſolemn occaſion; and all the trinkets of the defunct are expoſed in the coffin,

coffin, and buried in the grave with the remains. The bier is lined with cambric and with lace; and when cloſed, it is covered with a quantity of expenſive cloth, upon which are ſometimes depoſited wines and other liquors for the recreation of the gueſts, while a hog, poultry, and other viands, are offered up as an expiatory ſacrifice. When the body is carried to the grave, they accompany the proceſſion with a ſong; and when the earth is ſcattered over it, they ſend forth a ſhrill and noiſy howl, which is no ſooner re-ecchoed, in ſome caſes, than forgotten.

After this ceremony, which in civilized countries is conſidered as a melancholy one, but of which few traces can be found in the ſepulture of a negro, the affected tear is ſoon dried, the pretended ſigh is ſoon ſuppreſſed, and the face of ſorrow becomes at once the emblem of joy. The inſtruments reſound, the dancers are prepared; the day ſets in cheerfulneſs, and the night reſounds with the chorus of

contentment; and the day only riſes to awaken in their minds the regret of a neceſſary departure, and to ſummon them to their expected work.

Happy, and in ſome inſtances enviable, is this ſtate of inſenſibility! nor will *he* be ſcandalized who looks into our cathedrals and houſes of mortality, in which ſo many hundreds are yearly buried without any accompaniment, but a vacant queſtion, 'Who was he? Poor man! I am ſorry 'for him. It is, alas! what we muſt all 'come to. He is happy in death, and I 'am as yet content with life.'

As an evil, few negroes conſider death in this light. I never knew one who did, or who either dreaded it by anticipation, or who was apprehenſive when it was hovering near. In oppoſition to this fact, how are we to account for the weakneſs of Haller and Johnſon? of two men who rendered life valuable by their writings, and who taught us, whatever was their example,

example, that there was no fear in death until it came. Peace to their manes! and let thoſe only whoſe practice in this mortal ſtate has been like theirs, preſume to ſay how a man, and a philoſopher, ought to die.

THE CONCLUSION.

IN the foregoing pages I have deſcribed, according to my abilities, what I have ſeen, and what I know: and I have given an account of the ſeaſons as I have obſerved them, and of the cultivation of the cane and plantain-tree, throughout their various ſtages, from a long and intimate knowledge of their growth; and I truſt, that my different remarks upon the country and the negroes may be found juſt, although many objects of deſcription may not have been examined with the ſame attention, nor ſeen exactly with the ſame eyes.

When I left Jamaica in the year 1777, the country bare the appearance of approaching plenty; the eſtates were recovering, in ſome meaſure, from that general deſolation which a ſucceſſion of ſtorms had unhappily occaſioned: but the conſequences of

of thoſe convulſions of nature are ſtill felt, and will for ever depreſs the expectations, and ſtifle the hopes, of the unſupported; who have not had means or credit to renew that ſtrength and thoſe reſources which drought and famine, and mortality in conſequence thereof, have ſo mournfully deprived them: and, ſhould the abolition of the ſlave trade, contrary to humanity in ſome inſtances, and derogatory to policy in all, take place, the little they have remaining will wear away by degrees, and they and their families will be ultimately left to ſtarve.

Of what avail is land in Jamaica, without negroes, and without ſtock? And if the ſoil is to be neglected from the ſpeculations of humanity alone, the ſame idea would apply to the labourers of other countries, to the free-born Engliſhmen, and to the European ſlaves of Poland and the Valteline.

The amuſements of the negroes betray a contentment and independency of mind, which I have not often beheld in other people; and if we impartially compare their employments, after the ſetting day commands a remiſſion of toil, with thoſe of the peaſantry of other climes, we ſhall ſee them retire to their houſes with a cheerful ſtep, and a jocund mind, while the latter are obliged to continue their evening and nocturnal toil in the painful proviſion of fuel, and of the other neceſſaries of life, to ſupport a helpleſs family, an aged parent, or a worthleſs ſon. After theſe ſhall have been provided, an unfeeling ſteward may enter at their doors; and although the rains ſhall ſpout in torrents through the thatch, and not one corner of the hovel ſhall be dry; although they ſhall have toiled from the riſing to the ſetting ſun, and have been obliged to work in the night, and to labour in their dreams; yet are their remonſtrances neglected, and their miſeries unrelieved: their goods are diſtrained; they are turned out of doors, and their families wan-

der

der vagrants over the face of the earth; or end their melancholy days, and broken-hearted, in a gaol.

I have ſeen the peaſantry and the poor of many countries; and, I hope, under the idea of obtaining knowledge: I have had a perſonal opportunity of knowing their natural reſources, of aſcertaining their fictitious wants, and of being made acquainted with their ultimate dependence: and upon this ground, I am not afraid to advance, that I cannot recollect many ſituations, which from a ſuperiority of local comforts I could point out as happy, compared to that of a good, and of a well-appointed ſlave: and even the very worſt may be protected, ſupported, and made contented if they will.

The Weſt-India Iſlands ſeem, for ſome years paſt, to have been marked by a fluctuation of calamities;—by the diſtreſſes of foreign war, by the interruption of internal peace

peace: and thoſe properties which the enemy has ſpared, are now likely to be ruined by that country to which they have been taught to look up for protection.

The viſitations of the Almighty in hurricanes, in drought, and famine, the ſcourges of war, with the deſtructive accompaniments of martial law, of a remiſſion of induſtry, and an augmentation of expence, have been misfortunes under which their inhabitants have lately bent; and from thoſe inflictions of Heaven, and depreſſions of men, the Iſlands are but juſt recovering, when, lo! an innovation is introduced, to break the bonds of harmony and peace, to annihilate that dependency which is the chain of ſocial compact, and to deſtroy that obedience which is the cement of government, and which, being a relative duty in life, connects, preſerves, and keeps entire and well balanced, that machine which the leaſt preponderation on either ſide would injure, or deſtroy.

Three

Three ſucceſſive years of quiet and abundance would have helped to inſtill freſh ſpirits, and to open new hopes, to thoſe inhabitants who were lately ſunk by the preſſure of events; and who would more boldly have erected their heads, and looked forward to more happy proſpects: a more confidential intercourſe would have ſubſiſted in the commercial negociations of the country; and the haunts of ſociety would have appeared again to ſmile with looks of congratulation, and the heart to have expanded with convivial pleaſure and hoſpitality; and the debtor would have looked the creditor in the face with the confidence of payment, and importunity would have been loſt in the willingneſs of advance.

Such began to be the promiſe of the recovering Iſles, when, lo! a calamity ſuperior to any above mentioned ſtalks forth at large, and confounds at once all ranks and deſcriptions of people; and which, if carried to further exceſs, will end in treachery, famine, or the ſword.

It

It is not to be ſuppoſed that any people, however they may wiſh to be obedient to the laws, will tamely ſubmit to ſee their means of exiſtence unjuſtly torn from them, at once, without their conſent, and without a compenſation: and, after the ſtruggles of America, it could hardly be thought that any ideas could enter into the ſyſtem of Britiſh politics, that could convert encouragement into tyranny, and make ſpeculation triumph over expediency, neceſſity, and juſtice. The tongue of humanity has certainly a right to ſpeak, and her voice ſhould be undoubtedly heard; but the ends that are to be obtained by an inquiry into abuſes, ought to be in conſequence of abuſes proved, and not barely to be taken up upon the ſuggeſtions, and the *ipſe dixit* of any man, or deſcription of men.

If the Iſlands be of ſuch little conſequence to the mother country, why ſend out troops for their defence, which cannot be of ſervice? why erect fortifications that would moulder away at the appearance of an

an enemy? why ſwell the public burdens, and ſacrifice the private peace and health of individuals, too many of whom have already fallen unhappy victims to the climate?

As the fate of the colonies now hangs by a ſlender thread, it is the duty of every one concerned in their preſervation, to work his ideas into the general web, that ſtrength may be given to the general maſs; and to this end the rotten parts ſhould be extracted, the weak repaired, and the whole be made, if not beautiful, at leaſt conſiſtent: and I cannot help wiſhing that thoſe who are poſſeſſed of more ſkill, had had my experience in the management of negroes, and that the errors I have committed may be corrected for the future ſervice of thoſe whoſe fortune it may be to engage in the ſame purſuits, and whom I ſincerely wiſh a more general ſucceſs than I have found.

It was my intention to contraſt ſome of the moſt awful and ſublime views that I have

have ſeen in other countries, with thoſe which a long reſidence in Jamaica, and a conſtant obſervation of nature in her moſt varied forms, had enabled me to make: but from this I was diſcouraged by the growing ſize of the work, which has already far exceeded in bulk my original intention. I had fully determined however to delineate ſome of the moſt wild and romantic ſituations of Switzerland, that had fallen under my own obſervation: but here my preſumption has been happily reſtrained by an attentive, and hence a pleaſing and inſtructive, peruſal of Mr. Coxe's letters, deſcriptive of that ſtupendous region; and of which, ſeparated as I had unfortunately long been from all literary information, I had not received any account when the preceding pages were committed to the preſs: and which letters preclude any deſcription of thoſe ſcenes which he has obſerved with a juſt and poetic eye, which he has diſcriminated like a painter, explained like a philoſopher, and felt like a man.

The

The bay of Port-Royal may be, without degradation, oppoſed to that of Naples; for the idea of a town ſubmerged beneath the waves, and the ruins of which are ſtill viſible in the depths of the ocean, cannot fail to excite ideas of a grand and romantic caſt; while the aſpiring appearance of Veſuvius, whoſe columns of ſmoke are obſerved to blacken the clouds, as its eruptions have devaſted the earth, may pour a different train of reflections upon the mind of him who, from effects, may be inclined to revert to cauſes, and endeavour to explain the operations of nature in the deſtruction ſhe has occaſioned.

I have often thought that a Georgic might be compoſed from the various ſeaſons of Jamaica, the progreſſive labours of the negroes, the tendence of the cattle, the cultivation of the fields, the manufacture of ſugar, and from the various deſcriptions and reflections which they naturally occaſion; and I have not the leaſt doubt, if the claſſic and poetic Mr. Maſon had ſeen that

that country, that he would have preferred a ſubject ſo open to genius, and in which taſte and learning might have been appoſitely applied, to that of Engliſh gardening, which admits of the pleaſing indeed, the tranquil, and refined; but in which the ſublimities of inundations, the effects of thunder, and the dread of ſtorms, bear no proportion of deſcriptive imagery. The fancy might likewiſe find many pauſes in which to introduce the epiſode, to inſert the metaphor, to weep with the afflicted, and to rejoice at the puniſhment of tyrants.

The paſtoral world in that region is full of charms, and theſe are obvious at every turn; nor would the knowledge and practice of improvement be without incentives to awaken ſtudy, and to perfect genius.

The different elements ſeem to be more diſcriminated in that country than in any other. The fire rages in all the ſplendours of devaſtation; the water pours down from the

the clouds in deluges; the inundations or overwhelm or hide the earth; while the raging ſea accumulates her briny mountains, and pours her vengeance on the ſhores. The earth is diſturbed, and ſhaken by tremendous heavings; the mountains and the rocks are rent aſunder, and towns, with all their inhabitants, are either ſwallowed up, or are entombed alive; while the air, collected into winds, ruſhes forth upon the wings of deſolation and of death, deſtroys at once their labours and their hopes, and even teaches the infidel to know that he is not beyond the reaching arm of Almighty vengeance.

Than the views of Jamaica, and thoſe of England, no impreſſions can be more diſſimilar: and if we have not, in the firſt region, as objects of pictureſque beauty, the ſwelling tower that breaſts the clouds, and the ſteeple whoſe angles divide the ſhowers; if we have not there the lofty ſpire that pierces the miſt, or the venera-

ble ruin to project the ſhade; yet are there other objects of rural imagery, that may in ſome meaſure ſupply their place, and that may equally intereſt from the darkneſs of their maſſes, and the grandeur of their forms.

In leaving Jamaica, I took a melancholy farewell of a country in which my fortune had very greatly ſuffered from the repeated viſitations of Heaven, and in which I much endured in conſequence of my own imprudence. I left many liberal and confiding creditors; ſome acquaintances whom I ſhall ever remember with reſpect; and ſome friends and relations whom I ſhall think upon with gratitude, and regard with veneration and with love.—And theſe I left —for what? My ſituation but too plainly ſpeaks; and he who could hold out one hand in pledge of amity, and with the other invite the miniſters of ſhame and ſorrow, may ſometimes bluſh to know by whom it was occaſioned.

Cut

Cut off at once upon my arrival from all poſſibility of treating with thoſe to whom I was indebted, and in queſt of a change of climate to recover a conſtitution broken down by ſickneſs and affliction; after having left a country in which ſlavery is eſtabliſhed by law, I found myſelf a priſoner, unheard, and unarraigned, in one in which arreſt is ſanctioned, though contrary to the conſtitution, and in which I have found that a man, although born to freedom, may become a ſlave.

THE END.